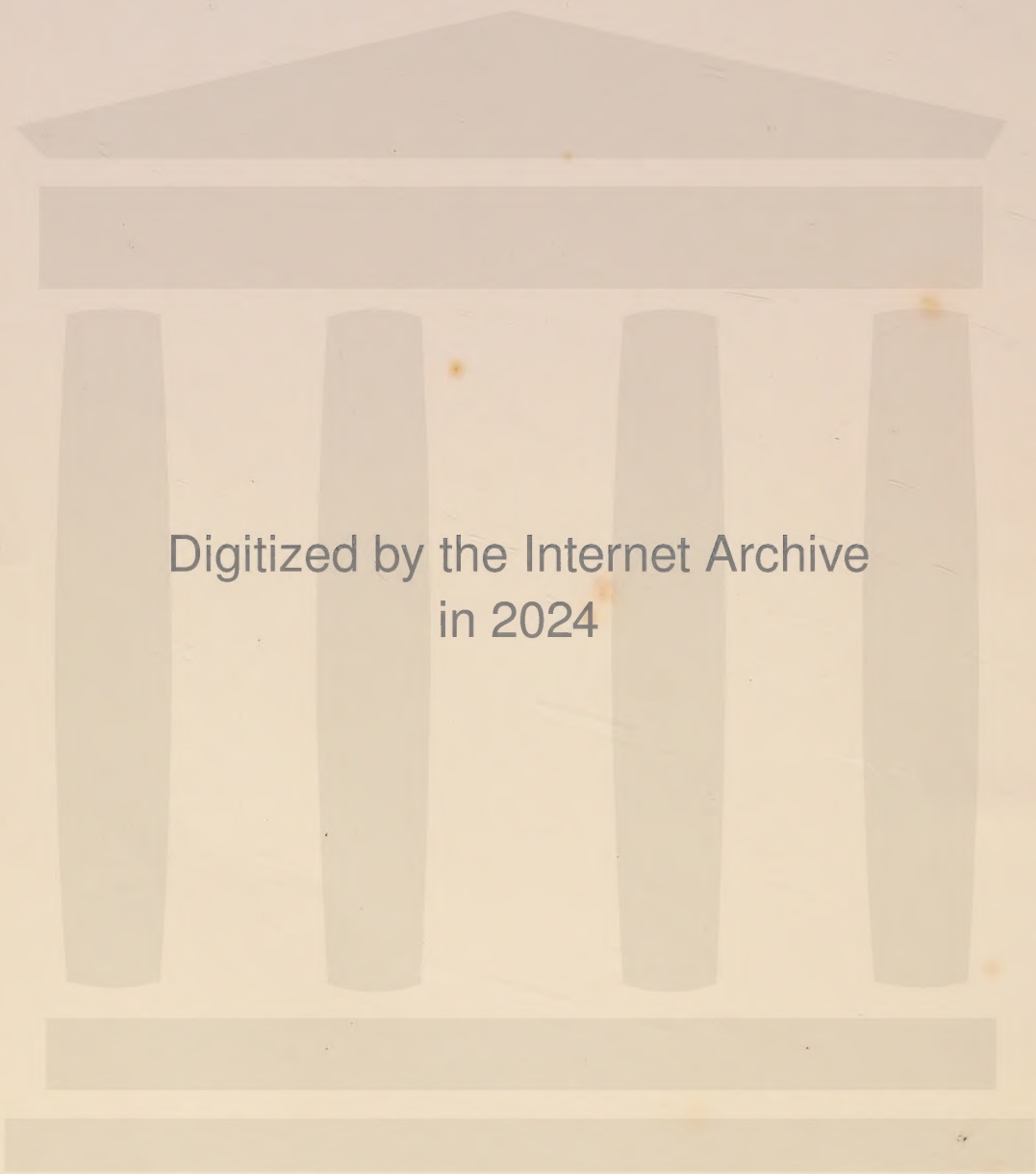


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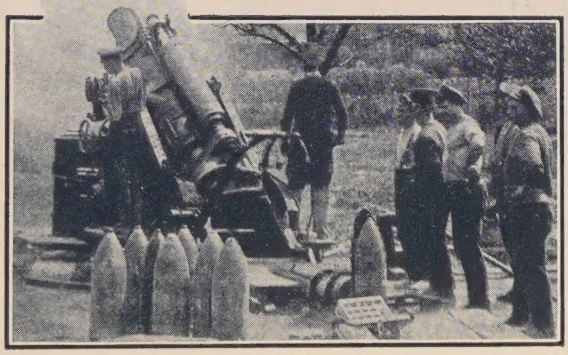
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'I WAS THERE!'

THE HUMAN STORY OF THE GREAT WAR OF 1914–1918

Edited by

SIR JOHN HAMMERTON



VOLUME ONE

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WHERE THE 'CONTEMPTIBLES' LANDED IN 1914

ove Boulogne harbour there now towers this figure of Britannia, thirty-five feet high. It looks out across the harbour to the narrow strip sea between England and France, across which came the first British soldiers in August 1914 and the mighty hosts which later swelled tain's Army on the Western front. It overlooks that part of the Channel which, thanks to the efforts of the Dover Patrol, was a safe l sure sea highway between England and France throughout the four years of war. Very appropriately it was unveiled by Lord Cavan



FIRST ADVANCE GUARD OF BRITAIN'S MIGHTY HOST AT MONS, AUGUST 21, 1914

These Lancers were the first British troops to arrive at Mons and were therefore the vanguard of the millions of men who were to follow them to the front during the four years of war. They formed a part of Allenby's Cavalry Division and had travelled by railway to the neighbourhood of Maubeuge, twelve miles from Mons. There they detrained at Erquelinnes just on the French border on the main Paris–Berlin railway under the protection of the fortress of Maubeuge. Their first task was to cover the deployment of the infantry in the region east-north-east of Mons. In this new and unpublished photo they are here seen entering Mons from the south-east on Friday, August 21, 1914.

Mons Museum

FOREWORD



by the Editor

HERE is no new history of the World War. The Editor's name is associated with no fewer than six considerable works of wide circulation that come within the category of history or chronicle.

But here, for the first time in any adequate form, he presents the Human Story of the War. A story told elsewise in only a fragmentary way.

Our main concern in this new work is neither with victory nor defeat. Tactics and strategy get little consideration in these pages.

Our preoccupation from first to last is with the individual and personal reactions of events upon those who took part in them, from Private to Field-Marshal.

> *"I Was There" is the keynote of every chapter. Nothing that we print here had its origin outside of immediate personal experience. The entire literature of the Great War, published during its progress and since November 11, 1918, has been ransacked to secure the most vivid and vital personal revelations of that human story, the telling of which has been too long delayed, and the proper telling of which can be achieved only by means of the selective process here pursued.*

The twentieth anniversary of the Armistice is an appropriate occasion for attempting this important task, and I am indeed happy to be still alive to essay it.

"History repeats itself." A hackneyed saying; but is it true? I think not. However much a new set of circumstances may resemble an old, there is rarely, if ever, repetition. The next world war will not repeat in any measure or degree the Great War of 1914–18.

ONLY in its human reactions will it present any resemblance. That is why, in commemorating the twentieth anniversary of "Cease Fire on All Fronts"—that never-to-be-forgotten day in the lives of us survivors!—I have devised this work to bring together the most vivid, the most poignant, the most human experiences of those who were privileged, or doomed (as you may esteem it), to have taken part—no matter how humble a part—in those world-shaking events of twenty years ago.

Human emotions repeat themselves—not history. The thoughts and feelings, the hopes and fears, the terrors and passions released by the Great War of 1914–18 will be released again and again while the world lasts, have indeed been released on many occasions since 1918—in Syria, in Morocco, in China, in Paraguay, in Abyssinia, in Spain. And it is with these thoughts and emotions in their relationship to the first World War that we are concerned in this particular work.

THE GREAT WAR: I WAS THERE! is offered as a companion work to the same editor's *World War, 1914–1918: A Pictured History.* Nothing that is printed here in text or picture duplicates or repeats anything from *World War.* I have been fortunate beyond my expectation in securing an astonishing number of hitherto unpublished war photographs. All likely sources have been most carefully examined in an effort to assemble a further series of unpublished and unhackneyed photographic documents of the war, and our pages may be left to bear witness to our success.

I have been largely helped in this respect by the authorities who control our admirable War Museum, but beyond its very considerable resources I have sought and secured a highly important series of entirely new photographs of the present-day aspect of celebrated war-time scenes, showing, especially those of Belgium, how remarkably the art of restoration has re-created historic places which the horrific passage of war had completely obliterated.

Nothing could be more eloquent of the ant-like activity of the human race than this faithful restoring of the past in terms of the past so absolute that it is difficult to believe war's destructive hand had ever touched it.

BUT even exceeding in permanent interest the attractiveness of our photography is the thrilling appeal of our literary contents. Here, for the first time in the engulfing flood of war literature, the reader may feel the immediacy of the personal narrative. I have sought throughout the incommensurable army of war books for those passages most worthy



of remembrance by virtue of their personal appeal and have woven them into the fabric of our story, so that they present a continuous, though ever-changing narration of the most moving and memorable events in the war.

In a way this is a review of all the literature of the Great War so far as it is concerned with the British effort. We are concerned with the Belgian, the French, or the Italian contribution to the winning of the war only in so far as it relates to the British. Our interest is centred on the activities of British arms, and less regard is paid to their success or failure than to the experiences of the British fighters of every grade in the doing of their duty.

My object, then, is essentially to signalize the twentieth anniversary of the Armistice with no mere chronicle of Britain's achievement, but with a genuine record of the personal experiences, thoughts and emotions, of the men who fought in the Great War—unforgotten leaders and "forgotten men" alike—which are of the real stuff of human life, worthy of remembrance even when the cause and culmination of the Great War itself may have become obscure. And in this spirit I submit THE GREAT WAR: I WAS THERE! to the friendly consideration of that vast body of readers who may still answer to the description "We the Survivors."

SMILING ARMY 20 YEARS AGO—SCARRED VETERANS TODAY

Of the great British Army that fought in France and Flanders from 1914 to 1918 near a million lie dead in foreign soil; many of the survivors are grey-haired veterans and many bear war wounds that cripple them for life. But it was with smiles, as the photograph above shows, that the lads marched out to face the enemy, and it is with smiles that the veterans of today, even those who, below, still linger in Roehampton Hospital, bear the price of having faithfully served their king and country. One such veteran is a survivor from the first days of the Mons retreat.



THE KING WAS THERE

No one with more justice could claim an honoured place amongst veterans of the Great War than His Majesty King George VI, who played a gallant part at the Battle of Jutland in May 1916. He tells of his experience in a letter to a friend, some extracts of which we are privileged to print below

It is sometimes forgotten that of the two elder sons of King George V it was the second, Prince Albert, who was in the front line of action at the outbreak of war.

He had passed through the normal training of a naval cadet at Osborne and Dartmouth, had made his first cruise in H.M.S. Cumberland, and had been posted as a midshipman to H.M.S. Collingwood. He performed the ordinary duties of the rank without the smallest special privilege, and was known to his messmates as plain "Mr. Johnstone."

He served afloat during those early exciting weeks when the Grand Fleet was standing out to sea, for there was no harbour sufficiently secure to shelter that great armada, but his experience at this time was not a long one, for it was sadly interrupted by severe intermittent illness. He had to be sent ashore to hospital and it was nearly two years before his recovery permitted him to go to sea again. He faced this trial with exemplary courage and patience, and when he was well enough took a turn of duty on the staff at the Admiralty. But at the critical hour when the German High Seas Fleet was to leave its harbours and make its one desperate fling to cripple the might of the British Navy he was again at his post in H.M.S. Collingwood.

News came on May 30, 1916, that the German fleet was out, and on May 31 took place the most famous naval action of the war, the Battle of Jutland.

The Collingwood was in the First Battle Squadron, and the present King took his station as second in command of A turret. About 6 o'clock in the evening the Collingwood moved into the battle area and her guns came into action. She in turn received the attentions of an enemy torpedo which was skilfully avoided, and also came under shell fire. For some time Prince Albert stayed on the top of the turret.

His own vivid, simple account is such as any other enthusiastic young naval officer might have written, and was contained in a letter to his former tutor. It is given below:

"The Jutland battle was a great thing to have been in, and it certainly was very different from what I expected.

"We, of course, in the Collingwood saw a good deal more than some of the other ships, and we fired more than they did. We were not hit at all, which was very lucky, though we were straddled several times.

"One shell dropped over the forecastle, missing us by inches!

"I was in the fore turret, second in command. Tait was O.C.T. During some part of it I was sitting on top when they straddled us. I didn't remain up very long after that!

"We had no breakdowns of any sort. Everything worked very well, and as for the men, they were quite marvellous. Just as cheery as usual and worked like demons.

"The worst part of it was the night afterwards. We ceased firing at 9 p.m. and then went to night defence till 2 a.m., when we closed up in the turrets again.

"We were sick at not seeing the enemy again that morning. An old Zepp was sighted at 4 a.m., who gave away our position to them.

"Of course, there were many side shows, most of them extremely funny, but I can't tell you them now.

"I heard from Mr. Start the other day, and several times from Greig. I used to see a good deal of poor old Percy when he was in London last April. It was very sad his going down in the Queen Mary.

"I see a certain amount of The Term at different times, but they change ships so often it is impossible to remember where they all are.

"I was down at Torquay the other day, for a fortnight, and I went over to the college to see the old place. They are building on extra dormitories and classrooms, etc., behind the seamanship room. What a pity it was they never looked ahead when the plans were drawn out! They have now got five terms there, but shortly there will be six, so you can see how much room will have to be made for them.

"My younger brother George has now gone to Osborne. He went last September. I enjoyed your story of the Turk on Turco Goat.

"Wishing you the best of luck,
"Ever
"Yours very sincerely,
"ALBERT."

"My younger brother" is the present Duke of Kent.

"The worst part of it was the night afterwards." One can well imagine the sensations of the young Prince as the Collingwood steamed through the darkness with every mind agog for a renewal of the action in the morning. But it early became apparent that the Germans intended no further encounter and the last shots the Collingwood fired were at the "old Zepp" which had appeared in the dawn sky. Then she steamed back to her anchorage in Scapa Flow, passing on her way the wreckage of a German cruiser.



HE SAW JUTLAND

King George VI, as Prince Albert, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in 1916 after the Battle of Jutland. The photograph was taken soon after his promotion.

For the first time since William IV as Duke of Clarence was present at the Siege of Gibraltar a future King of England had taken part in a major naval action, displaying typical coolness and courage in emergency.

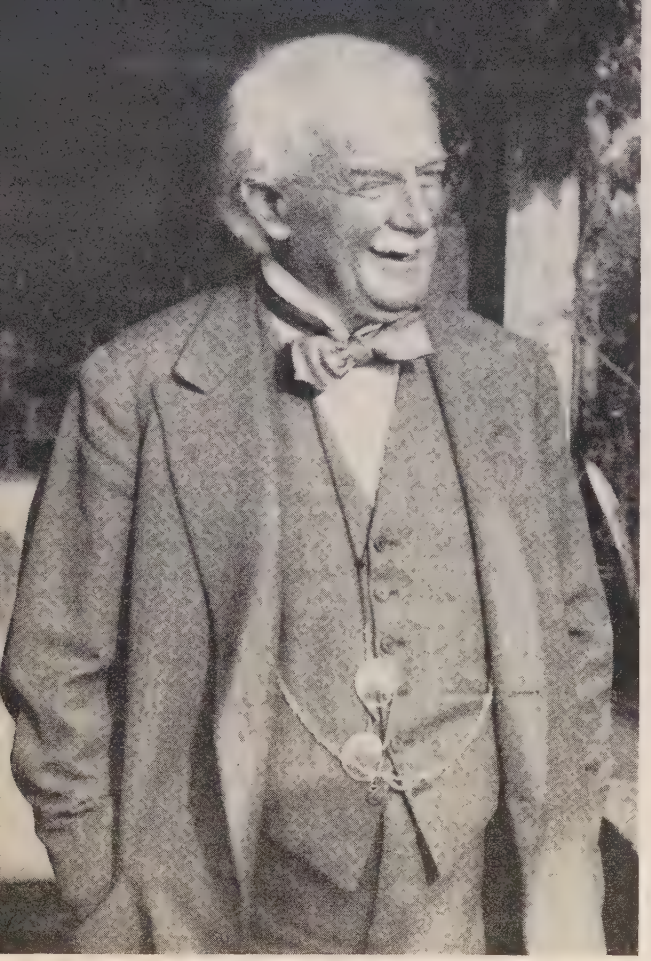
When in the spring of 1938 King George opened the great Empire Exhibition at Glasgow he met in the Shipping Section an old shipmate, Chief Petty Officer J. Jervois, who served with him in the Collingwood.

"You probably saw more of Jutland than I did," said Jervois, "because you were second in command of the 12-inch gun in 'A' turret."

"Yes, I remember now," replied the King. "You were down in that funny little cubby-hole, the fore medical flat."

BRITAIN'S GREAT WAR LEADER

THE Empire was fortunate in finding in the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George a war leader of immense strength and dauntless spirit. It was due to him that the British armies in the field were the best equipped, the best rationed, and, in the end, commanded the best supply of munitions. The dramatic words which follow are from his classic 'War Memoirs,' here printed by permission of the author and his publishers, Messrs. Ivor Nicholson & Watson



LLOYD GEORGE TODAY

Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1914, averted the financial crisis which followed the threat of war. He became Minister of Munitions in 1915 when the annual output of shells was twenty-three millions. By the end of 1917 it had risen to the vast total of one hundred and seventy-two millions.

"BOOM!" The deep notes of Big Ben rang out into the night the first strokes in Britain's most fateful hour since she arose out of the deep. A shuddering silence fell upon the Cabinet room. Every face was suddenly contracted in a painful intensity.

"Doom!" "Doom!" "Doom!" to the last stroke. The big clock echoed in our ears like the hammer of destiny. What destiny? Who could tell? We had challenged the most powerful military empire the world has yet brought forth. France was too weak alone to challenge its might and Russia was ill-organized, ill-equipped, corrupt. We knew what brunt Britain would have to bear. Could she stand it?

There was no doubt or hesitation in any breast. But let it be admitted without shame that a thrill of horror quickened every pulse. Did we know that before peace would be restored to Europe we should have to wade through four years of the most concentrated slaughter, mutilation, suffering, devastation, and savagery which mankind has ever witnessed? That twelve millions of the gallant youth of the nations would be slain, that another twenty millions would be mutilated? That Europe would be crushed under the weight of a colossal war debt? That only one empire would stand the shock? That the three other glittering empires of the world would have been flung to the dust, and shattered beyond repair? That revolution, famine, and anarchy would sweep over half Europe, and that their menace would scorch the rest of this hapless continent?

Has the full tale yet been told? Who can tell? But had we foreseen it all on the 4th of August we could have done no other . . .

Soon after we dispersed. There was nothing more to say that night. Tomorrow would bring us novel tasks and new bearings. As I left I felt like a man standing on a planet that had been suddenly wrenched from its orbit by a demoniac hand and that was spinning wildly into the unknown.



MAKING A WAR-TIME SPEECH

Lloyd George became Prime Minister in January, 1916, and during the succeeding two years of the war he gained the Empire's implicit confidence. Here he is making one of his fighting speeches at Thame, in Oxfordshire.

SECTION I

The War Clouds Break

JULY 29 — AUG. 9, 1914

At the end of July and the beginning of August 1914 the war clouds broke over Europe. Literature has few more moving passages than that in which Lady Oxford reveals the inner secrets of her heart and the emotions of her husband, then Prime Minister. ¶ At the same moment Mr Winston Churchill was shouldering, with characteristic courage and energy, the gravest responsibilities at the Admiralty, and tells, in the manner of a great master, what was passing through his mind and how he came to have the British Fleet in perfect readiness when the hour struck. ¶ In the Foreign Office that brilliant author and critic, the Hon. Harold Nicolson, was watching, through the eyes of a young man, the sands of peace run out. ¶ In the streets of London, Paris and Berlin three notable journalists, Mr. Michael Macdonagh, Sir Philip Gibbs and Mr. H. W. Nevinson, were also watching, with the eyes of trained observers, the reactions of the common people to the shattering threat of war. So the immense narrative starts on the highest keynote of expectancy.



MARGOT ASQUITH

The brilliant wit and vivacious personality of Margot Asquith made her an ideal helpmate for a Prime Minister upon whom the cares of state bore heavily. She is here seen in recent years with her great qualities undimmed.

*1 August 4, 1914

ASQUITH SPEAKS the WORDS of FATE

by The Countess of Oxford and Asquith

DOWNING STREET was full of anxious and excited people as we motored to the House of Commons the next day (August 4, 1914); some stared, some cheered, and some lifted their hats in silence.

I sat breathless, with my face glued to the grille of the gallery, when my husband rose to announce that an ultimatum had been sent to Germany. He said:

"In conformity with the statement of policy made here by my right hon. friend the Foreign Secretary yesterday, a telegram was early this morning sent by him to our Ambassador in Berlin. It was to this effect:

"'The King of the Belgians has made an appeal to His Majesty the King for diplomatic intervention on behalf of Belgium. His Majesty's Government are also informed that the German Government have delivered to the Belgian Government a Note proposing friendly neutrality entailing free passage through Belgian territory and promising to maintain the independence and integrity of the Kingdom and its possessions, at the conclusion of peace; threatening in case of refusal to treat Belgium as an enemy. We also understand that Belgium has categorically refused this as a flagrant violation of the law of nations. His Majesty's Government are bound to protest against this violation of a Treaty to which Germany is a party in common with themselves, and must request an assurance that the demand made upon Belgium may not be proceeded with, and that her neutrality will be respected by Germany. You should ask for an immediate reply.'

"We received this morning from our Minister at Brussels the following telegram:

"'German Minister has this morning addressed Note to the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating, that as Belgian Government have declined the well-intended proposals submitted to them by the Imperial Government, the latter will, deeply to their regret, be compelled to carry out, if necessary by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable in view of the French menaces.'

"Simultaneously — almost immediately afterwards — we received from the Belgian Legation here in London the following telegram:

"'General staff announces that territory has been violated at Gemmenich (near Aix-la-Chapelle).'

"Subsequent information tends to show that the German force has penetrated still further into Belgic territory. We also received this morning from the German Ambassador here the telegram sent to him by the German Foreign Secretary, and communicated by the Ambassador to us. It is in these terms:

"'Please dispel any mistrust that may subsist on the part of the British Government with regard to our intentions by repeating most positively formal assurance that, even in the case of armed conflict with Belgium, Germany will under no pretence whatever annex Belgian territory. Sincerity of this declaration is borne out by the fact that we



ON A DAY IN 1914

From 1914 to 1916 Herbert Henry Asquith bore the heavy burden of leading the British Empire in the Great War. Through those troubled years the happy union of minds which characterized his married life lightened his load as this delightful photograph, taken during a visit to a munition factory, shows.

solemnly pledged our word to Holland strictly to respect her neutrality. It is obvious that we could not profitably annex Belgian territory without making, at the same time, territorial acquisitions at expense of Holland. Please impress upon Sir E. Grey that German Army could not be exposed to French attack across Belgium, which was planned according to absolutely unimpeachable information. Germany had consequently to disregard Belgic neutrality, it being for her a question of life or death to prevent French advance."

Henry paused after this, and then said in a slow, loud voice :

" I have to add on behalf of His Majesty's Government : We cannot regard this as in any sense a satisfactory communication. We have, in reply to it, repeated the request we made last week to the German Government, that they should give us the same assurance in regard to Belgian neutrality as was given to us and to Belgium by France last week. We have asked that a reply to that request, and a satisfactory answer to the telegram of this morning—which I have read to the House—should be given before midnight."

I looked at the House, which was packed from gallery to floor while my husband was speaking, and through misty eyes the heads of the listening members appeared to me as if bowed in prayer.

" A satisfactory answer before midnight . . ."

These fateful and terrible words were greeted by wave upon wave of cheering, which continued and increased as Henry rose and walked slowly down the floor of the House.

Few understood why he went down to the Bar, and when he turned and faced the Speaker, excitement knew no bounds.

I quote from Hansard :

THE PRIME MINISTER at the Bar acquainted the House that he had a message from His Majesty, signed by His Majesty's own hand, and he presented the same to the House, and it was read by Mr. Speaker (all the Members of the House being uncovered), and it is as followeth :

" ' GEORGE R.I.—The present state of public affairs in Europe constituting in the opinion of His Majesty a case of great emergency within the meaning of the Acts of Parliament in that behalf, His Majesty deems it proper to provide additional means for the Military Service, and therefore, in pursuance of these Acts, His Majesty has thought it right to communicate to the House of Commons that His Majesty is, by proclamation, about to order that the Army Reserve shall be called out on permanent service, that soldiers who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve shall continue in Army Service for such period not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service as to His Majesty may seem expedient, and that such directions as may seem necessary may be given for embodying the Territorial Force and for making such special arrangements as may be proper with regard to units or individuals whose services may be required in other than a military capacity.' "

WHEN the Speaker had finished reading the King's message all the members poured out of the House, and I went down to the Prime Minister's room.

Henry looked grave and gave me John Morley's letter of resignation, saying :

" I shall miss him very much ; he is one of the most distinguished men living."

For some time we did not speak. I left the window and stood behind his chair :

" So it is all up ? " I said.
He answered without looking at me :
" Yes, it's all up."

I sat down beside him with a feeling of numbness in my limbs, and absently watched through the half-open door the backs of moving men . . .

Henry sat at his writing-table leaning back with a pen in his hand . . . What was he thinking of ? . . . His sons ? . . . My son was too young to fight ; would they all have to fight ? . . . I got up and leant my head against his : we could not speak for tears.

When I arrived in Downing Street I went to bed.

How *did* it . . . how *could* it have happened ? What were we all like five days ago ? We were talking about Ireland and civil war ; Civil war ! People were angry but not serious ; and now the sound of real war waved like wireless round our heads and the whole world was listening.

I looked at the children asleep after dinner before joining Henry in the Cabinet room. Lord Crewe and Sir Edward Grey were already there and we sat smoking cigarettes in silence ; some went out, others came in ; nothing was said.

The clock on the mantelpiece hammered out the hour, and when the last beat of midnight struck it was as silent as dawn.
We were at War.

I left to go to bed, and, as I was pausing at the foot of the staircase, I saw Winston Churchill with a happy face striding toward the double doors of the Cabinet room.



THEY WERE WAITING FOR THE 'WORDS OF FATE'

August 3, 1914, the last day of peace, was a Bank Holiday with a clear sky and hot sunshine, such a day as would ordinarily have seen London deserted. The tension was so great, however, that but few people gave a thought to the country or the seaside, and as the day wore on thousands of anxious citizens made their way to Westminster, where the final decision—peace or war—was being taken. Here is seen part of the tense crowd outside the Houses of Parliament on that fateful day.

WHEN the FOREIGN OFFICE BLUNDERED

by Hon. Harold Nicolson, M.P

HAROLD NICOLSON, the brilliant author and critic, was a junior member of the staff at the Foreign Office in August 1914. His father (described in this article as 'Nicolson') was at the time Permanent Under Secretary, and later became Lord Carnock. Mr. Nicolson's story of the major blunder made in those critical hours of delivering the wrong declaration of war to the German Ambassador, Prince Lichnowsky, makes fascinating reading



HAROLD NICOLSON

One of his first tasks in diplomacy was to retrieve the wrongly worded letter handed to the German Ambassador with the passports for himself and his staff.

ON Monday, August 3, Germany declared war on France. At 4 p.m. on that afternoon Sir Edward Grey at last informed the House of Commons and the country of the real nature of the crisis. Nicolson, in an agony of suspense, waited in his room at the Foreign Office.

. . . . . .

An hour later Sir Edward Grey returned to the Foreign Office. Nicolson went upstairs to see him. The Secretary of State was leaning gloomily by the window. Nicolson congratulated him on the success of his speech.

Sir Edward did not answer. He moved into the centre of the room and raised his hands with clenched fists above his head. He brought his fists with a crash upon the table. "I hate war," he groaned, "I hate war."

. . . . . .

At 2 p.m. on Tuesday, August 4, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed his ultimatum to Berlin. The German Government were asked to furnish assurances that they would respect the neutrality of Belgium. A reply was requested by midnight, German time, that is, by 11 p.m. in London. If no satisfactory reply were forthcoming Sir Edward Goschen was to ask for his passports and to say that the British Government would feel bound to "take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a Treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves."

It was expected that the German Government would return no reply to this ultimatum, and that a state of war would arise at 11 p.m. A communication was thus prepared for delivery to Prince Lichnowsky when the ultimatum expired. The text of this communication was as follows:

Foreign Office, August 4, 1914.

Your Excellency,

"The result of the communication made at Berlin having been that His Majesty's Ambassador has had to ask for his passports, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that in accordance with the terms of the notification made to the German Government to-day His Majesty's Government consider that a state of war exists between the two countries as from to-day 11 o'clock p.m.

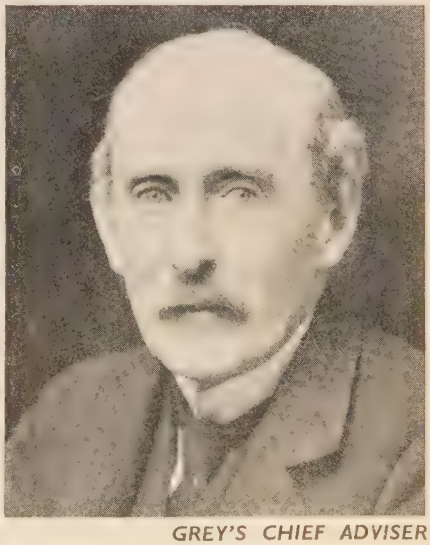
"I have the honour to enclose passports for Your Excellency, your Excellency's family and staff."

"I have, etc.,

"E GREY."

THE staff of the Foreign Office were working at full pressure under the blaze of countless electric lights. The mobilisation scheme prepared in 1910 by the Committee of Imperial Defence had worked from the first moment of the "precautionary period," without a hitch. All that remained, by 9 p.m. on August 4, was to despatch the warning telegrams to every British Consul on the face of the globe. These telegrams had already been printed in advance and had reposed for years in what was known as the "war-press" in the Western Department. All that was required was to affix with the rubber stamp provided, the one word "Germany" in the blank space left between the word "War" and the ensuing phrase "Act upon instructions." To relieve the tension of their nerves the senior members of the Foreign Office participated in this pastime. While they were so engaged, one of the private secretaries dashed in to say that Germany had declared war on England. It was then 9.40 p.m. and the Note prepared for Prince Lichnowsky was hurriedly re-drafted and typed. The amended version began with the words: "The German Empire having declared war upon Great Britain, I have the honour, etc." The passports were enclosed in this amended letter and Mr. Lancelot Oliphant, at that time assistant in the Eastern Department, was despatched to Prince Lichnowsky. He returned at 10.15.

A few minutes later an urgent telegram arrived *en clair* from Sir Edward Goschen at Berlin. It reported that the Chancellor had informed him by telephone that Germany would not reply to the ultimatum, and that, therefore, to his infinite regret, a state of war would arise by midnight.



GREY'S CHIEF ADVISER

As Permanent Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord Carnock, then Sir Arthur Nicolson, was Sir Edward Grey's chief adviser in the crisis of 1914. He had previously had a distinguished career in the Diplomatic Service.



THE SHADOW OF DESPAIR

A dejected and broken man, Prince Lichnowsky, German Ambassador to the Court of St. James's at the outbreak of war, is here seen walking in St. James's Park after he had heard at the Foreign Office of the British ultimatum to Germany. He had been German Ambassador since October 1912, and had worked strenuously to improve Anglo-German relations.

THE Foreign Office were appalled by this intimation. Immediate enquiries were made as to how the previous information had been received to the effect that Germany had taken the initiative in declaring war. It was ascertained that this information was based on an intercepted wireless message by which German shipping were warned that war with England was imminent. It was the Admiralty who had made the mistake. The Foreign Office then realised with acute horror that they had handed to Prince Lichnowsky an incorrect declaration of war. It was decided that at any cost this document must be retrieved and the right one substituted. It was decided also that the youngest member of the staff should be selected for this invidious mission, and the choice therefore fell upon Nicolson's [i.e. Lord Carnock's] youngest son.

Grasping the correct declaration in a nervous hand, he walked across the Horse Guards Parade and rang the bell at the side door of the Embassy which gives on the Duke of York's steps. It was by then some five minutes after eleven. After much ringing a footman appeared. He stated that Prince Lichnowsky had gone to bed. The bearer of the missive insisted on seeing His Excellency and advised the footman to summon the butler. The latter appeared and stated that His Highness had given instructions that he was in no circumstances to be disturbed. The Foreign Office clerk stated that he was the bearer of a communication of the utmost importance from Sir Edward Grey. The butler, at that, opened the door and left young Nicolson in the basement. He was absent for five minutes. On his return he asked Sir Edward Grey's emissary to follow him and walked towards the lift. They rose silently together to the third floor and then proceeded along a passage.

The butler knocked at a door. There was a screen behind the door and behind the screen a brass bedstead on which the Ambassador was reclining in pyjamas. The Foreign Office clerk stated that there had been a slight error in the document previously delivered and that he had come to substitute for it another and more correct version. Prince Lichnowsky indicated the writing table.

"You will find it there," he said.

PASSPORTS TO DEFEAT

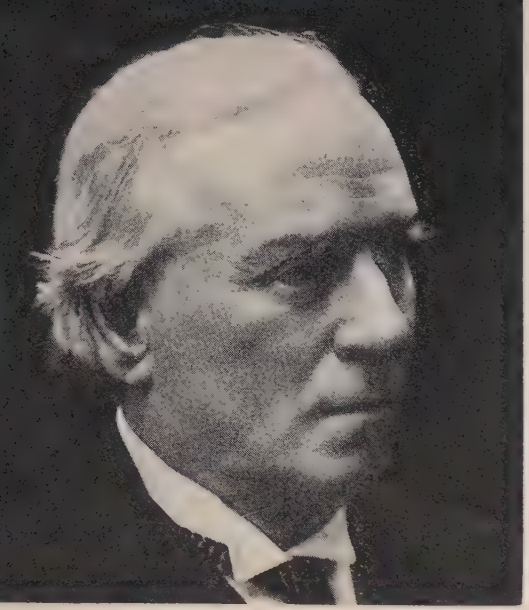
THE envelope had been but half-opened, and the passports protruded. It did not appear that the Ambassador had read the communication in which the passports had been enclosed. He must have guessed its significance from the feel of the passports and have cast it on his table in despair. A receipt had to be demanded and signed. The blotting pad was brought across to the bed, and the pen dipped in the ink. While the Ambassador was signing, the sound of shouting came up from the Mall below, and the strains of the Marseillaise. The crowds were streaming back from Buckingham Palace. Prince Lichnowsky turned out the pink lamp beside his bed, and then, feeling he had perhaps been uncivil, he again lighted it. "Give my best regards," he said, "to your father. I shall not in all probability see him before my departure."

Thirteen years later this same Foreign Office clerk visited Prince Lichnowsky at his shooting box in Silesia. For two hours they walked together in the snow-clad woods. The Englishman burned to ask a question which had been troubling him for all those years. "Did you ever know," he longed to ask, "that we gave you, that night in London, the wrong declaration of war ?"

He did not ask this question.

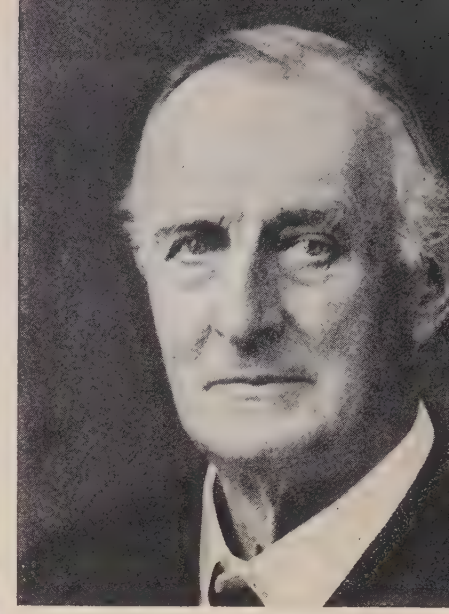
Some Unforgotten Men

To the rank and file who gave their lives, to those who returned after glorious service to the humble paths of civil life has been given the title "Forgotten Men." Here are pictured some of the great British war leaders whose names will always be enshrined in the pages of history



ASQUITH

To Herbert Henry Asquith, Prime Minister and great Liberal statesman, fell the immense responsibility of making the decision for war.



GREY

Sir Edward Grey. Foreign Minister, man of silence, imperturbable, enigmatic, kept Europe guessing as to the British attitude until the last moment.



HALDANE

Lord Haldane's organizing genius was responsible for the striking efficiency of the British regular and Territorial armies. He has been called "the greatest of War Ministers."



BOTHA

Enemy leader in the Boer war, Louis Botha (above), in 1914 threw his great influence on the side of the Allies, suppressed rebellion and conquered German S.W. Africa. Sir R. Borden (right) was Canada's premier and headed the magnificent response of the Dominion.



MILNER

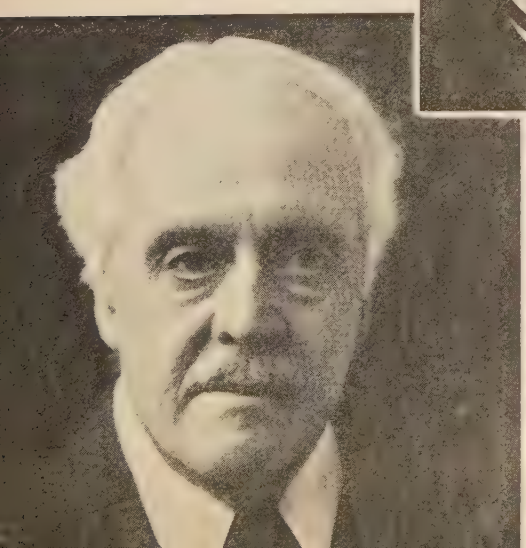
Two notable civilians both with the most powerful influence on the conduct of the war were Lord Milner (above), famous administrator of Egypt, Secretary for War in 1918, and Lord Northcliffe (left), greatest of all newspaper magnates whose counsels prevailed on many critical occasions.



BORDEN



NORTHCLIFFE



BALFOUR



BONAR LAW

Two Conservative leaders held high posts in the Coalition Governments which were initiated in 1915, Arthur Balfour (left), who served as First Lord of the Admiralty, and Bonar Law (right), who became leader of the House and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Both were British representatives at the Peace Conference.

Photos: Russell, Topical, Dawney, Elliott and Fry, and Imperial War Museum

They Led Us Through the War



KITCHENER
Lord Kitchener is here seen leaving the War Office in 1916 on his way to a Cabinet Council. He is wearing the blue undress uniform of a Field Marshal.



COWANS
As Quartermaster-General Sir John Cowans supplied the British Army Overseas throughout the war.

FISHER
Called from retirement to be First Lord (October 1914–May 1915), Lord Fisher showed in that office the genius that created the Dreadnought.





JELLICOE
Commander-in-Chief at Jutland, Sir John Jellicoe pursued the best course for his country without thought of personal glory.



SMITH-DORRIEN **FRENCH**
Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, above, beloved by all who served under him, showed his mettle in the retreat from Mons by fighting the battle of Le Cateau. Sir John French, below, Commander of the B.E.F. for the first eighteen months of the war, saved the Channel Ports.



BYNG
Sir Julian Byng was on active service in France and Gallipoli from October 1914 until the end of the war. He won popular fame as Commander of the Canadian Corps, known as the "Byng Boys."









WILSON
Sir Henry Wilson was a prominent figure throughout the war. He was Chief of the Imperial General Staff in the dark days of March, 1918.

RAWLINSON
Sir Henry Rawlinson was one of the most successful Army Commanders in the Great War, and his army played an important part in the final offensive.

Photos: Sport & General, Elliott and Fry, Russell, Swaine, and Imperial War Museum

. . . But All Have Passed Away



PLUMER

Sir Herbert Plumer, who commanded the 2nd Army, was a general of outstanding ability and a trusted adviser of Haig.



MONASH

A civil engineer, Sir John Monash commanded the Australian Corps and proved a born army commander.



HAIG

Sir Douglas Haig served on the Western Front without interruption from August, 1914, until the end of the war, when he was Commander-in-Chief.



ROBERTSON **ALLENBY**

Sir William Robertson, above, rose by his great abilities from the ranks to be Chief of the Imperial Staff and a Field-Marshal. Sir Edmund Allenby's campaign in Palestine which resulted in the utter defeat of the Turks was brilliantly planned and carried out.



BEATTY

Sir David Beatty commanded the Battle Cruiser Squadron at Jutland and received the surrender of the German Fleet at Scapa.



STURDEE

Sir Doveton Sturdee's victory over Admiral von Spee at the battle of the Falkland Islands avenged the defeat of Admiral Craddock's squadron at the battle of Coronel little more than a month earlier.





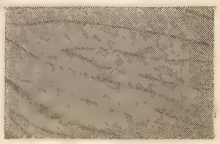
LAWRENCE

T. E. Lawrence's romantic part in the war, when he commanded an Arab army, earned him the title of "Lawrence of Arabia."



HORNE

Sir Henry Horne, the only Artillery officer during the war to command an army, perfected the creeping barrage.



Photos: Russell, Swaine, Russell of Southsea, Humphrey Joel, Imperial War Museum, and Howard Coster



WINSTON CHURCHILL TODAY

No living statesman has had a more adventurous life nor served his country in high office with greater distinction than Winston Churchill. He is here seen as he is today, twenty-four years after the events of 1914 in which he played so notable a part.

THE CLOCK TICKS at the ADMIRALTY

by Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, P.C., M.P.
First Lord of the Admiralty, 1911–1915

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL was personally responsible for the preparedness of the British Navy in those fateful pre-War days. His task was magnificently fulfilled, and he here tells of his own part in an immortal chapter of British history up to the moment when hostilities opened

THERE was complete agreement in the Cabinet upon every telegram sent by Sir Edward Grey and in his handling of the crisis. But there was also an invincible refusal on the part of the majority to contemplate British intervention by force of arms should the Foreign Secretary's efforts fail and a European war begin. Thus, as the terrific week wore on and the explosion became inevitable, it seemed probable that a rupture of the political organism by which the country had so long been governed was also rapidly approaching. I lived this week entirely in the official circle, seeing scarcely anyone but my colleagues of the Cabinet or of the Admiralty, and moving only to and fro across the Horse Guards between Admiralty House and Downing Street.

Each day as the telegrams arrived showing the darkening scene of Europe, and the Cabinets ended in growing tension, I pulled over the various levers which successively brought our naval organization into full preparedness. It was always necessary to remember that if Peace was preserved every one of these measures, alarmist in their character and involving much expense, would have to be justified to a Liberal House of Commons.

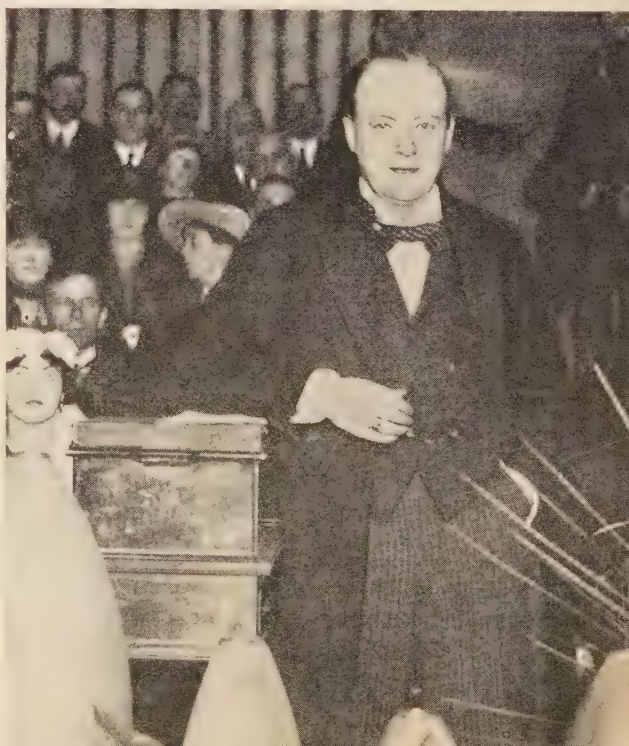
That assembly, once delivered from the peril, would certainly proceed upon the assumption that British participation in a Continental struggle would have been criminal madness. Yet it was not practicable often to divert the main discussions of the Cabinet into purely technical channels. It was, therefore, necessary for me to take a peculiar and invidious personal responsibility for many things that had to be done when their turn came. I had also to contemplate a break-up of the governing instrument. Judged by reports and letters from members, the attitude of the House of Commons appeared most uncertain.

. . . . . .

AT the Cabinet I demanded the immediate calling out of the Fleet Reserve and the completion of our naval preparations. I based this claim on the fact that the German Navy was mobilizing, and that we must do the same. The Cabinet, who were by no means ill-informed on matters of naval organization, took the view after a sharp discussion that this step was not necessary to our safety, as mobilization affected only the oldest ships in the Fleet, and that our main naval power was already in full preparedness for war and the Fleet in its war station. I replied that though this was true, we needed the Third Fleet ships, particularly the older cruisers, to fulfil the rôles assigned to them in our war plan. However, I did not succeed in procuring their assent.

On Saturday evening I dined alone at the Admiralty. The foreign telegrams came in at short intervals in red boxes which already bore the special label "Sub-Committee," denoting the precautionary period. The flow was quite continuous, and the impression produced on my mind after reading for nearly an hour was that there was still a chance of peace. Austria had accepted the conference, and intimate personal appeals were passing between the Tsar and the Kaiser. It seemed to me, from the order in which I read the series of telegrams, that at the very last moment Sir Edward Grey might succeed in saving the situation. So far no shot had been fired between the Great Powers. I wondered whether armies and fleets could remain mobilized for a space without fighting, and then demobilize.

I HAD hardly achieved this thought when another Foreign Office box came in. I opened it and read "Germany has declared war on Russia." There was no more to be said. I walked across



DURING THE WAR

Winston Churchill, here seen addressing a wartime meeting, had held the office of First Lord of the Admiralty in Mr. Asquith's Government for nearly four years at the outbreak of the World War when he made the momentous decisions described in this chapter.

the Horse Guards Parade and entered 10, Downing Street by the garden gate. I found the Prime Minister upstairs in his drawing-room; with him were Sir Edward Grey, Lord Haldane and Lord Crewe; there may have been other Ministers.

I said that I intended instantly to mobilize the Fleet notwithstanding the Cabinet decision, and that I would take full personal responsibility to the Cabinet the next morning. The Prime Minister, who felt himself bound to the Cabinet, said not a single word, but I was clear from his look that he was quite content.

As I walked down the steps of Downing Street with Sir Edward Grey, he said to me, "You should know I have just done a very important thing. I have told Cambon that we shall not allow the German fleet to come into the Channel." I went back to the Admiralty and gave forthwith the order to mobilize. We had no legal authority for calling up the Naval Reserves, as no proclamation had been submitted to His Majesty in view of the Cabinet decision, but we were quite sure that the Fleet men would unquestionably obey the summons. This action was ratified by the Cabinet on Sunday morning, and the Royal Proclamation was issued some hours later.

THE Cabinet sat almost continuously throughout the Sunday, and up till luncheon-time it looked as if the majority would resign. The grief and horror of so many able colleagues were painful to witness. But what could any one do? In the luncheon interval I saw Mr. Balfour, a veritable rock in times like these, and learned that the Unionist leaders had tendered formally in writing to the Prime Minister their unqualified assurances of support.

I returned to the Admiralty. We telegraphed to our Commanders-in-Chief:

"To-day, August 2, at 2.20 the following note was handed to the French and German Ambassadors. (*Begins.*) The British Government would not allow the passage of German ships through the English Channel or the North Sea in order to attack the coasts or shipping of France (*ends*).

"Be prepared to meet surprise attacks."

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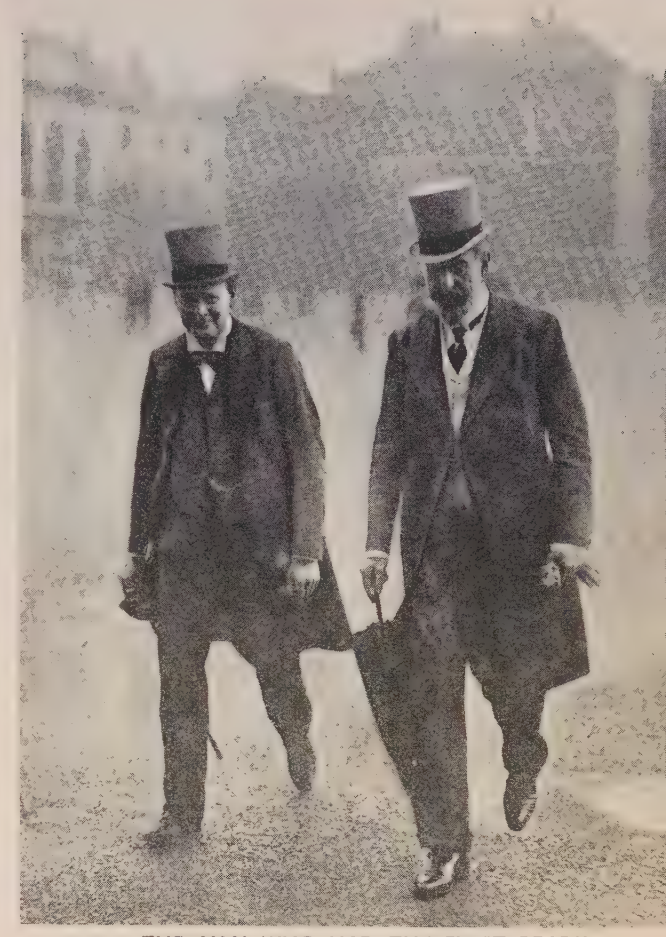
Meanwhile events were influencing opinion hour by hour. When the Cabinet met on Sunday morning we were in presence of the violation of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg by the German troops. In the evening the German ultimatum to Belgium was delivered. The next day arrived the appeal of the King of the Belgians that the guaranteeing powers should uphold the sanctity of the Treaty regarding the neutrality of Belgium. This last was decisive. By Monday the majority of Mr. Asquith's colleagues regarded war as inevitable. Discussion was resumed on Monday morning in a different atmosphere, though it seemed certain that there would be numerous resignations.

Before the Cabinet separated on Monday morning, Sir Edward Grey had procured a predominant assent to the principal points and general tone of his statement to Parliament that afternoon. Formal sanction had been given to the already completed mobilization of the Fleet and to the immediate mobilization of the Army. No decision had been taken to send an ultimatum to Germany or to declare war upon Germany, still less to send an army to France. These supreme decisions were never taken at any Cabinet. They were compelled by the force of events, and rest on the authority of the Prime Minister. We repaired to the House of Commons to hear the statement of the Foreign Secretary. I did not know which of our colleagues had resigned or what the composition of a War Government would be. The aspect of the assembly was awed but resolute. No one could mistake its intention. Sir Edward Grey made his statement with the utmost moderation.

In order that there should be no ground for future reproaches, he informed the House that the Germans were willing to comply with the British demand that no German warship should be sent into the English Channel. The sombre march of his argument carried this weighty admission forward in its stride. When he sat down he was possessed in an overwhelming measure of the support of the assembly.

Neither he nor I could remain long in the House. Outside, I asked him "What happens now?" "Now," he said, "we shall send them an ultimatum to stop the invasion of Belgium within 24 hours."

Some of the Ministers still clung to the hope that Germany would comply with the British ultimatum and would arrest the onrush of her armies upon Belgium. As well recall the avalanche, as easily suspend in mid-career the great ship that has been launched and is sliding down the ways. Germany was already at war with Russia and France. It was certain that in 24 hours she would be at war with the British Empire also.



THE MEN WHO HAD THE FLEET READY

The fact that the British Fleet was in a high state of efficiency at the outbreak of war was due to two men, Mr. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, and Prince Louis of Battenberg, First Sea Lord. They are here seen walking to the Admiralty early in 1914.

ALL through the tense discussions of the Cabinet one had in mind another greater debate which must begin when these were concluded. Parliament, the nation, the Dominions, would have to be convinced. That the cause was good, that the argument was overwhelming, that the response would be worthy, I did not for a moment doubt. But it seemed that an enormous political task awaited us, and I saw in the mind's eye not only the crowded House of Commons, but formidable assemblies of the people throughout the land requiring full and swift justification of the flaming action taken in their name. But such cares were soon dispersed. When the Council doors had opened and ministers had come into the outer air, the British nation was already surging forward in its ancient valour, and the Empire had sprung to arms.

At 5.50 p.m. we sent the following message :—

Admiralty to all Ships

General message. The war telegram will be issued at midnight authorizing you to commence hostilities against Germany, but in view of our ultimatum they may decide to open fire at any moment. You must be ready for this.

Now, after all the stress and convulsion of the preceding ten days, there came to us at the Admiralty a strange interlude of calm. All the decisions had been taken. The ultimatum to Germany had gone : it must certainly be rejected. War would be declared at midnight.

As far as we had been able to foresee the event, all our preparations were made. Mobilization was complete. Every ship was in its station : every man at his post. All over the world, every British captain and admiral was on guard. It only remained to give the signal. What would happen then ? It seemed that the next move lay with the enemy. What would he do ? Had he some deadly surprise in store—some awful design, long-planned and perfected, ready to explode upon us at any moment NOW ? Would our ships in foreign waters have been able to mark down their German antagonists ? If so, morning would witness half a dozen cruiser actions in the outer seas.

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In the War Room of the Admiralty, where I sat waiting, one could hear the clock tick. From Parliament Street came the murmurs of the crowd ; but they sounded distant and the world seemed very still. The tumult of the struggle for life was over : it was succeeded by the silence of ruin and death. We were to awake in Pandemonium.

I had the odd sense that it was like waiting for an election result. The turmoil of the contest seemed finished ; the votes were being counted, and in a few hours the announcement would be made. One could only wait ; but for what a result ! Although the special duties of my office made it imperative that I, of all others, should be vigilant and forward in all that related to preparation for war, I claim that in my subordinate station I had in these years before the war done nothing wittingly or willingly to impair the chances of a peaceable solution, and had tried my best to make good relations possible between England and Germany better now.

I THANK God I could feel also in that hour that our country was guiltless of all intended purpose of war. Even if we had made some mistakes in the handling of this awful crisis—though I do not know them—from the bottom of our hearts we could say that we had not willed it. Germany, it seemed, had rushed with head down and settled resolve to her own undoing. And if this were what she had meant all along, if this was the danger which had really menaced us hour by hour during the last ten years, and would have hung over us hour by hour until the crash eventually came, was it not better that it should happen now — now that she had put herself so hopelessly in the wrong, now that we were ready beyond the reach of surprise, now that France and Russia and Great Britain were all in the line together ?

The First Sea Lord and the Chief of Staff came in with French Admirals who had hurried over to concert in detail arrangements for the co-operation of the two Fleets in the Channel and in the Mediterranean. They were fine figures in uniform, and very grave. One felt in actual contact with these French officers how truly the crisis was life or death for France. They spoke of basing the French Fleet on Malta—that same Malta for which we had fought Napoleon for so many years, which was indeed the very pretext of the renewal of the war in 1803. "*Malte ou la guerre.*" Little did the Napoleon of St. Helena dream that in her most desperate need France would have at her disposal the great base which his strategic instinct had deemed vital. I said to the Admirals, "Use Malta as if it were Toulon."

The minutes passed slowly.

Once more now in the march of centuries Old England was to stand forth in battle against the mightiest thrones and dominations. Once more in defence of the liberties of Europe and the common right must she enter upon a voyage of great toil and hazard across waters uncharted, towards coasts unknown, guided only by the stars. Once more "the far-off line of storm-beaten ships" was to stand between the Continental Tyrant and the dominion of the world.

IT was 11 o'clock at night—12 by German time—when the ultimatum expired. The windows of the Admiralty were thrown wide open in the warm night air. Under the roof from which Nelson had received his orders were gathered a small group of Admirals and Captains and a cluster of clerks, pencil in hand, waiting. Along the Mall from the direction of the Palace the sound of an immense concourse singing "God Save the King" floated in. On this deep wave there broke the chimes of Big Ben ; and, as the first stroke of the hour boomed out, a rustle of movement swept across the room.

The war telegram, which meant "Commence hostilities against Germany," was flashed to the ships and establishments under the White Ensign all over the world.

I walked across the Horse Guards Parade to the Cabinet room and reported to the Prime Minister and the Ministers who were assembled there that the deed was done.



FOR A FATEFUL FORTNIGHT

On July 16, 1914, the Fleet was mobilized for the Review held by King George V at Spithead on July 18–20, and naval reservists were called up for their annual fortnight at sea. Before that fortnight elapsed Britain was at war, and many of the reservists, such as those seen here leaving Waterloo to join their ships, did not see their homes again, except for brief periods of leave, until peace came.

AT the ELEVENTH HOUR . . .

by Michael Macdonagh

Parliamentary Correspondent of 'The Times' in 1914

THE writer, who is the author of many outstanding books, was, when war broke out, representing a great national newspaper in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons. He was a spectator, with unique opportunities, of the moving scene during the first momentous days of tense excitement in London

IT was in the streets, on August 4, 1914, after the House of Commons had adjourned, that I found myself in an atmosphere of real passion. Parliament Street and Whitehall were thronged with people highly excited and rather boisterous. A brilliant sun shone in a cloudless sky. Young men in straw hats were in the majority. Girls in light calico dresses were numerous. All were already touched with the war fever. They regarded their country as a crusader—redressing all wrongs and bringing freedom to oppressed nations. Cries of "Down with Germany" were raised. Germany was the aggressor. She must be made to ask humbly for peace. The singing of patriotic songs, such as "Rule Britannia," "The Red, White and Blue," and also "The Marseillaise," brought the crowds still closer together in national companionship. They saw England radiant through the centuries, valiant and invincible, and felt assured that so she shall appear for ever.

There were opponents, of course. Making my way through the crowds to Trafalgar Square, I found two rival demonstrations in progress under Nelson's Pillar—on one side of the plinth for war, and on the other against! The rival crowds glared at each other. Cries of "The War does not concern us; we must keep out of it," were answered with cries of "Down with Germany, the violator of Belgium." I looked up at the effigy of Nelson—"sailing the sky with one arm and one eye"—to see whether in imagination I could notice any change in his attitude. But no! He was still gazing steadily in a south-easterly direction—towards France, the enemy—as he had been placed on his pillar eighty years ago.

SUDDENLY, amidst the cheering and booing, a cry was raised, "The King! The King! On to Buckingham Palace!" And at once we streamed out of Trafalgar Square into the Mall and out of Whitehall into Birdcage Walk, both ways leading to the Palace. I saw Asquith escorted and cheered a little while before, as he drove in his motor-car from the House of Commons to Downing Street. But it is the King and not the Prime Minister that is pre-eminently the representative of the nation. It is the King and not the Prime Minister that is the centre of the people's thought and vision at a time of national festivity or emergency.

WE WANT OUR KING!

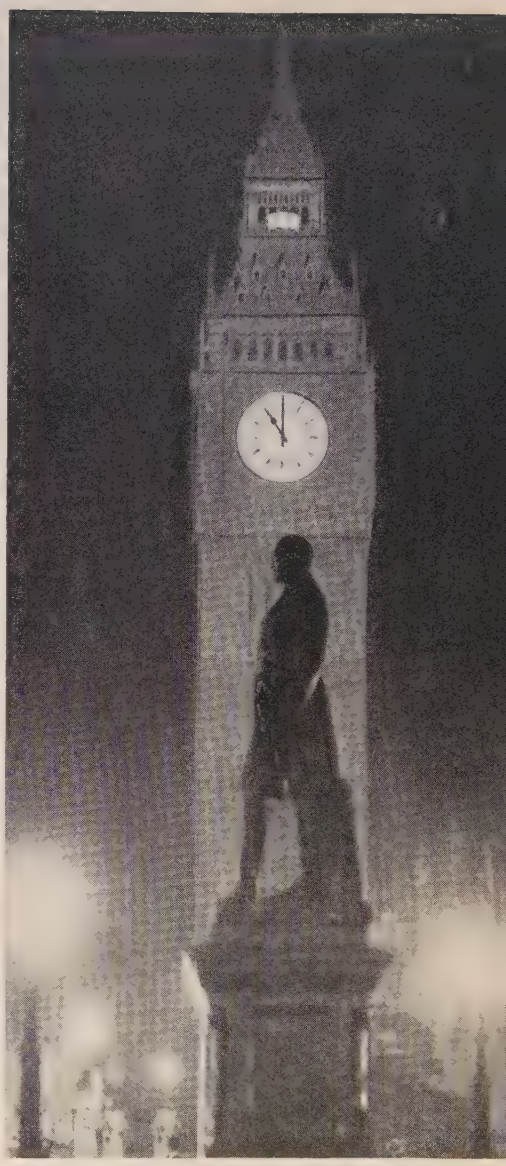
AT Buckingham Palace the crowd sang "God Save the King" with tremendous fervour. His Majesty came out on to the balcony overlooking the forecourt, wearing the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet. He was joined by the Queen, the Prince of Wales and Princess Mary. The crowd greeted the King by singing, with cheerful boisterousness, that homely British song, "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." It conveyed to monarch and subjects the authentic thrill of comradeship. His Majesty was not only the best of kings: he was also of good fellows the best. He had to appear on the balcony three separate times during the evening because of the chanting of the crowd, slowly and with emphasis, betokening that they would have no refusal, "We—want—our—King." His Majesty smiled and bowed, bowed and smiled, while the throng sang to him that he was a jolly good fellow, again, again and again.

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AT the approach of the decisive hour of eleven (midnight German time) when the ultimatum to Germany was to expire, we returned in our thousands to Whitehall. Downing Street was as packed as it well could be. At No. 10, the Prime Minister's house, were gathered leading members of the Government. While we waited there was an incessant coming and going of callers. But no answer had come from Germany.

From the Clock Tower of the Houses of Parliament came the light and gladsome chimes of the four quarters which are set to the words:

All through this hour, Lord be my guide,
And by Thy power no foot shall slide.



STRIKING FOR WAR

The British ultimatum to Germany expired at midnight by Berlin time on August 4 and an hour earlier by Greenwich time, so that when Big Ben struck eleven Britain was at war.

THEN followed the slow and measured strokes of Big Ben proclaiming to London that it was eleven o'clock. We listened in silence. Perhaps it was but a reaction to the mood we were in, but I thought Big Ben was tolling the hour with an even more solemn note, for the pause between each stroke and its reverberation seemed unusually prolonged. Was he booming out the true and in the false? Was he booming out sweet peace and in red slaughter? At the eleventh stroke of the clock, the crowd, swarming in Downing Street, Parliament Street and Parliament Square, burst with one accord into "God Save the King."

No one came out of 10, Downing Street. No statement was made. There was no public proclamation that we were at war by a herald to the sound of trumpets and the beating

of drums. The great crowd rapidly dispersed in all directions, most of them running to get home quickly, and as they ran they cried aloud rather hysterically, " War ! " " War ! " " War ! " They were eager, no doubt, to spread the dread news in their family circles. Thus our entry into the Great War was announced by Big Ben tolling the hour of eleven ! And we had been brought into it by the challenge of a broken treaty.

August 5 (*Wednesday*)

" Britain at War." So London is informed this morning in bold black letters on the placard of *The Times*. In the House of Commons today, Asquith made officially the inevitable announcement :

" Since eleven o'clock last night a state of war has existed between Germany and this country."

The die is cast ! The House, again crowded to excess, received the news in silence. Emotions were battened down as are the hatches of a ship when a storm arises. Again it struck me as extraordinary that the House of Commons, the representative assembly of the people, has not been definitely asked, by a question put from the Chair, whether it was for war or against it. This enormous power is vested in the Crown and exercised by the dozen or so men forming the Cabinet, independently of parliamentary authority and control in the first instance. Of course, their action is reinforced and confirmed indirectly by Parliament.

THE FIRST £100,000,000

WHEN Asquith went on to say, " We propose to ask the House for a credit of £100,000,000," members burst into a terrific roar of applause, as much as to say, " We are ready." The speech of the Prime Minister was magnificent for its affecting strain of persuasiveness in England's vindication. It will rank among the historic parliamentary orations. There could be no greater contrast in personality—looks, manner and speech—than that presented by the two statesmen who were leading the country into the war—the rugged and unshapely Asquith and Grey graven to a perfection of form. " No nation," said Asquith in that deep voice of his, tremulous and vibrant, " has ever entered into a great struggle—and this is one of the greatest in history—with a clearer conscience and a stronger conviction that it is fighting not for aggression or the advancement of its own interests, but for principles whose maintenance is vital to the civilised world." The doubts and misgivings of the past two days were at rest. The House had braced itself for the ordeal that lay before us.

Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer, told the House that in order that the gold coinage might be withdrawn from circulation and used as a munition of war, the Government had decided to issue Treasury notes of twenty shillings' and ten shillings' value respectively — three millions by Friday and afterwards at the rate of five millions a day, until the supply was deemed sufficient. Lloyd George produced from his pocket one of the pound notes, and as he handed it across the table to Arthur Balfour, I heard him remark, " It is not a very pretty picture ; it is a first proof."

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I waited in the Reporters' Gallery while the members dispersed to the ancient cry of the doorkeeper, " Who goes home ? " Mr. Speaker Lowther, in wig and gown, stepped down from his high and canopied Chair and stood by its side waiting until the Sergeant-at-Arms came up the floor from his place by the main door and, lifting the Mace from the table, preceded him from the Chamber by the door immediately behind his chair. Members departed by the main door under the clock at the far end, not joking and laughing as is usually their way when a sitting is over, but in a low-voiced and restrained mood.

I HAVE often looked down on the empty Chamber and thought nothing of it, but on this occasion I felt as if I were having a strange experience. Events, perhaps the most fateful in the country's history, have taken place here during the past three days, and it seemed to me proper that the House should give some sign of having retained a consciousness of their significance. But no. From the oak-panelled walls came no vibration of the tremendous utterance of the three days—the Prime Minister's voice declaring that an ultimatum had been sent to Germany. Not even the sound of the closing of a door was heard—often the most tragic thing in life. There was only silence and emptiness.

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Things had begun to crumble about us—we who thought till the beginning of this week that we were rooted firmly in a peaceful and secure existence. A rush for food set in. Before going to the House of Commons on this day, I visited the two principal stores, Army and Navy and Civil Service, and found them both, like all the provision shops I passed in walking from Clapham, thronged with buyers. Those at the stores were principally women of the middle class, looking well-dressed and comfortably off. All of them had what appeared to be abnormally long lists of groceries. I confess I had my own little list. Are we not told that the first law of Nature is self-preservation ? That is the first reaction to a situation of danger. It is supposed that the pinch of war will first be felt in scarcity of food.



ANSWERING HIS COUNTRY'S CALL

As soon as war broke out there was an insistent demand from the British people that Lord Kitchener should be at the War Office. The Government yielded to it and on August 5, 1914, he was appointed Secretary of State for War. He is here seen leaving the War Office with Colonel Seely after one of his first visits. Behind is Lord Birkenhead (then F. E. Smith).

"Fill the cupboard," accordingly, was the order of the day. Every counter-hand at the Civil Service store in the Strand had a long line of customers waiting to be served. I joined one of them, but after two hours' wait I was still a good way from the counter, and had to leave unserved for the House of Commons. Notices were put up at the stores that the execution of orders was uncertain. Several provision shops at Clapham were so speedily sold out that they closed in the early afternoon. So far, there had been only a slight rise in prices; but price was only a secondary consideration. What people wanted was the food, and some were willing to pay any price for it. Hoarding was general, more or less. I hear of people who, taking the situation at the hop, had already packed their cupboards with provisions.

THE first appeal for recruits appeared on the walls of London on August 6. It was printed in the national colours. Within a deep red border, in vivid blue letters on a white ground, were the words, "Your King and Country Need You"—"YOU" being heavily underscored. "In this crisis," the poster said, "our Country calls on all her young unmarried men to rally round the Flag and enlist in the ranks of the Army"—ages 18–30 years. Another poster was headed, "A Call to Arms," and said: "An addition of 100,000 men to His Majesty's Regular Army is immediately necessary in the present grave national emergency." Lord Kitchener, who had been appointed Secretary of State for War, was confident "that this appeal will be at once responded to by all those who have the safety of our Empire at heart."

Thus the young men in straw hats, who were clamouring for war in Whitehall early in the week, were now afforded the opportunity of demonstrating their patriotism in a more practical form. Their response was immediate. The recruiting headquarters was in Old Scotland Yard, off Whitehall. As I passed there that evening I saw a big throng of young men still in straw hats, waiting their turn to get in and, in the old phrase, "take the King's shilling."

From the Press Gallery of the House of Commons on August 7, I witnessed a remarkable instance of the celerity with which that supposed slow-coach, Parliament, can be made to move in a crisis. The Defence of the Realm Act—an emergency war measure—was passed through all its stages in five minutes. Reginald McKenna, Home Secretary, who had charge of the Bill, did not even have it printed. All he had was a brief draft in writing of some of its provisions. He began by asking leave to bring in "a Bill to make Regulations during the present War for the defence of the Realm." The Regulations were to provide safeguards against spying and sabotage, seeking information to assist the enemy, tapping wires, showing signal lights, blowing up railway bridges or docks. The Bill also empowered the Government to come to sweeping decisions and take swift action in prosecuting the war.

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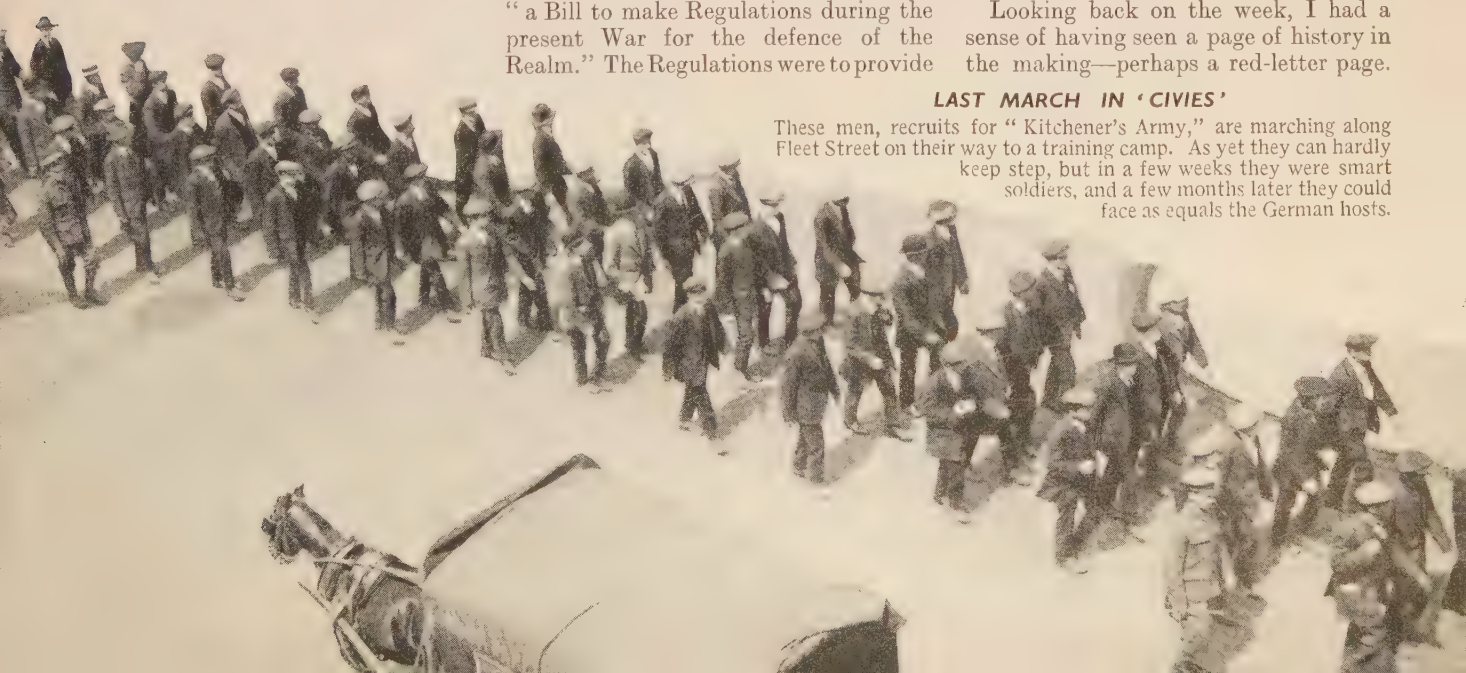
BY August 8 (Saturday) an angry outcry was raging against the hoarding of food. In the suburbs women loaded with parcels were stopped by other women and roughly deprived of their commodities. Delivery-vans of the provision stores were held up by men and their contents rifled. The Government said there was no lack of food. Maximum retail prices were fixed. As an example to all, it was announced that by order of the King and Queen, plain, simple living was to be the daily rule at the Royal table.

Looking back on the week, I had a sense of having seen a page of history in the making—perhaps a red-letter page.



SOME OF THE FIRST HUNDRED THOUSAND

The call for the first hundred thousand for what was known as "Kitchener's Army" met with an instant response. Outside the Central London Recruiting Office in those first August days police were necessary to marshal the crowds of men anxious to serve their King and country. So great was the rush that the gates had to be closed against the excited crowd of volunteers until the necessary equipment and training facilities were available.



LAST MARCH IN 'CIVIES'

These men, recruits for "Kitchener's Army," are marching along Fleet Street on their way to a training camp. As yet they can hardly keep step, but in a few weeks they were smart soldiers, and a few months later they could face as equals the German hosts.

THUNDER OVER PARIS

by Sir Philip Gibbs

'Daily Chronicle' Correspondent, 1914

SIR PHILIP GIBBS, who in the post-war years has endeared himself to an ever-widening circle of readers, was a war correspondent throughout the four years of war. He was in Paris at the outbreak, and here describes with his virile pen scenes in the French capital during the period of mobilization



SIR PHILIP GIBBS

In all the books written by this brilliant writer on the events of 1914–1918 he stresses the horror and uselessness of war.

THE thunderbolt came out of a blue sky and in the midst of a brilliant sunshine which gleamed blindingly above the white houses of Paris and flung back shadows from the poplars across the long, straight roads between the fields of France. The children were playing as usual in the gardens of the Tuileries, and their white-capped nurses were sewing and chatting in the shade of the scorched trees. The old bird man was still calling "Viens! Viens!" to the sparrows who came to perch on his shoulders and peck at the bread between his lips, and Punch was still performing his antique drama in the Petit Guignol to laughing audiences of boys and girls. The *bâteaux mouches* on the Seine were carrying heavy loads of pleasure-seekers to Sèvres and other riverside haunts.

In the Pavilion Bleu at St. Cloud elegant little ladies of the demi-monde sipped rose-tinted ices and said for a thousand times: "Ciel, comme il fait chaud!" and slapped the hands of beaky-nosed young men with white slips beneath their waistcoats and shiny boots and other symbols of a high civilization. Americans in Panama hats sauntered down the Rue de Rivoli, staring in the shop windows at the latest studies of nude women, and at night went in pursuit of adventure to Montmartre, where the orchestras at the Bal Tabarin were still fiddling mad tangoes in a competition of shrieking melody and where troops of painted ladies in the Folies Bergère still paraded in the *promenoir* with languorous eyes, through wafts of sickly scent.

The little tables were all along the pavements of the boulevards and the *terrasses* were crowded with all those bourgeois Frenchmen and their women who do not move out of Paris even in the dogdays, but prefer the scenery of their familiar streets to that of Dieppe and Le Touquet. It was the same old Paris crowded with Cook's tourists and full of the melody of life as it is played by the hoot of motor horns, the clang of steam trams, the shrill-voiced camelots shouting "La Presse! La Presse!" and of the light laughter of women.

Then suddenly the thunderbolt fell with its signal of war, and in a few days Paris was changed as though by some wizard's spell. Most of the children, with their white-capped nurses, vanished from the Tuileries gardens and the sparrows searched in vain for their bird man. Punch gave a final squawk of dismay and disappeared when the theatre of the Petit Guignol was packed up to make way for a more tragic drama.

A hush fell upon Montmartre, and the musicians in its orchestras packed up their instruments and scurried with scared faces — to Berlin, Vienna, and Budapesth. No more boats went up to Sèvres and St. Cloud with crowds of pleasure-seekers. The Seine was very quiet beneath its bridges, and in the Pavilion Bleu no dainty creatures sat sipping rose-tinted ices or slapped the hands of the beaky-nosed boys who used to pay for them. The women were hiding in their rooms, asking God—even before the war they used to ask God funny questions—how they were going to live now that their lovers had gone away to fight, leaving them with nothing but the memory of a last kiss wet with tears. It was not enough to live on for many days.

. . . . . .

THERE was no wild outbreak of Jingo fever, no demonstrations of bloodlust against Germany in Paris or any town of France, on that first day of August, when the people waited for the fateful decision which, if it were for war, would call every able-bodied man to the colours and arrest all the activities of a nation's normal life, and demand a dreadful sacrifice of blood and tears.

There was only a sense of stupefaction which seemed to numb the intelligence of men so that they could not reason with any show of logic or speak of this menace without incoherence, but thrust back the awful possibility with one word, uttered passionately and repeated a thousand times a day: "*Incroyable!*"



MOB FURY THAT WAS RARE

Though the French people as a whole showed remarkable self-restraint in face of the terrible provocation of the German attack, there were in Paris, as in London, a few hot-heads who showed their anger by destroying enemy property. This jeweller's shop in Paris was owned by an Austrian.

On August 1 there was a run on one of the banks. I passed its doors and saw them besieged by thousands of middle-class men and women drawn up in a long queue waiting very quietly—with a strange quietude for any crowd in Paris—to withdraw the savings of a lifetime or the capital of their business houses. There were similar crowds outside other banks, and on the faces of these people there was a look of brooding fear, as though all that they had fought and struggled for, the reward of all their petty economies and meannesses, and shifts and tricks and denials, of self-indulgences and starvings of soul, might suddenly be snatched from them.

A SHUDDER went through one such crowd when a young man came to speak to them from the steps of the bank. It was a kind of shuddering sigh, followed by loud murmurings, and here and there angry protests. The cashiers had been withdrawn from their desks and cheques could not be paid.

"We are ruined already," said a woman. "This war will take all our money. Oh, my God!"

She made her way through the crowd with a fixed, white face.

It was strange how in a day all gold disappeared from Paris. I could not see the glint of it anywhere, unless I drew it from my own purse.

. . . . . .

Part of the active army of France was already on the frontiers. Before the first whisper of war had reached the ears of the people, large bodies of troops had been sent to the frontier towns to strengthen the already existing garrisons. But the main army of the nation was pursuing the ordinary pursuits of civil life. To resist the might of Germany, the greatest military Power in Europe, already approaching the frontiers in vast masses of men and machines, France would have to call out all her manhood which had been trained in military service.

Aux armes, citoyens!
Formez vos bataillons!

THE call to arms came without any loud clamour of bugles or orations. Unlike the scenes in the early days of 1870, there were no street processions of civil enthusiasts. No painted beauty of the stage waved the tricolour to the shout of "À Berlin!" No mob orators jumped upon the café tables to wave their arms in defiance of the foe.

The quietness of Paris was astounding, and the first mobilization orders were issued with no more publicity than attends the delivery of a trade circular through the halfpenny post. Yet in hundreds of thousands of houses through France, and in all the blocks and tenements of Paris there was a drama of tragic quietude when the cards were delivered to young men in civilian clothes, men who sat at table with old mothers or young wives, or in lowly rooms with some dream to keep them company, or with little women who had spoilt the dream, or fostered it, or with comrades who had gone on great adventures with them between the Quartier Latin and the Mountain of Montmartre.

"*It has come!*"

. . . . . .

Fate had come with that little card summoning each man to join his depot, and tapped him on the shoulder with just a finger touch. It was no more than that—a touch on the shoulder. Yet I know that for many of those young men it seemed a blow between the eyes, and, to some of them, a strange grip as icy cold as though Death's fingers were already closing round their throats.

I seem to hear the silence in those rooms when for a moment or two young men stared at the cards and the formal words on them, and when, for just that time, all that life and death means came before their souls. Was this the summons, Death itself? Somewhere on the German side was a little steel bullet or a bit of shell waiting for the Frenchman to whom it was destined. How long would it have to wait to find its billet? Perhaps only a day or two—a question of hours, slipping away now toward eternity as the clock ticked on. From the old mother, or the young wife, from the little woman whose emotions and quarrels, greediness or self-denial, had seemed all that mattered in life, all that life meant to a young man of twenty-five or so, there came perhaps a cry, a name spoken with grief, or no word at all but the inarticulate expression of foreboding, terror, and a woman's anguish:

"Jean! . . . Mon petit! . . . O, mon pauvre petit!"

"C'est pour la patrie . . . mon devoir . . . je reviendrai bientôt . . . Courage, ma femme!"

Courage! How many million times was the word spoken that night of mobilization by women who saw the sudden pallor of their men, by men who heard the cry of their women? I heard it in the streets, spoken quite brutally sometimes, by men afraid of breaking down, and with a passionate tenderness by other men, sure of their own strength but pitiful for those whose spirit fainted at the spectre of death which stood quite close.



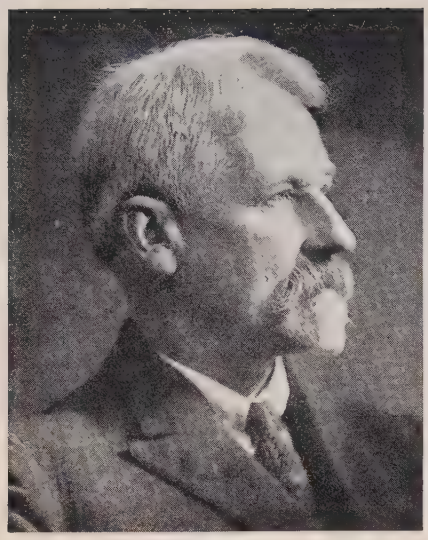
FORGOTTEN MEN OF FRANCE FLOCKING TO HER DEFENCE

On Saturday afternoon, August 1, 1914, mobilization orders were posted throughout France, and instantly the reservists of the French Army who had undergone their military training flocked to the colours and joined their regiments at the depot. The photograph shows reservists leaving the Gare du Nord, Paris, each one carrying a sack in which are his personal belongings. When he receives his uniform and equipment his civilian clothes will be sent back to his home in the bag.

BERLIN a-TIPTOE for WAR

by H. W. Nevinson
'Daily News' War Correspondent

ALREADY one of the most notable journalists of his time, Mr. H. W. Nevinson was in Berlin as correspondent for the London 'Daily News' during the first days of August 1914. His magnificently graphic description of his experiences in an enemy city ranks high in the literature of those stirring days



H. W. NEVINSON

Nevinson's first experience as a war correspondent dates back to the war between Greece and Turkey in 1897, and includes the Boer War and other campaigns. During the Great War he represented the "Daily News" on the Western Front and for a time in the East.

ON the evening of July 31 I started for Berlin. Down the midnight Channel the searchlights were turning and streaming in long, white wedges. Passing into Germany, we at once met trains full of working men in horse-trucks decked with flowers, and scribbled over with chalk inscriptions: "*Nach Paris*," "*Nach Petersburg*," but none so far "*Nach London.*" They were cheering and singing, as people always cheer and sing when war is coming.

We were only six hours late in Berlin, but my luggage was lost in the chaos of crowds rushing home from their summer holidays, and I never recovered it, though in the middle of the war I received a postcard that had somehow arrived through Holland, telling me that the porter, with whom I had left the "*Schein*," or registration ticket, had found the luggage, and what should I like done with it? A fine example of international honesty.

FOR two days I waited and watched. Up and down the wide road of "Unter den Linden" crowds paced incessantly by day and night, singing the German war songs: "*Was blasen die Trompeten?*" which is the finest; "*Deutschland, Deutschland ueber Alles*," which comes next, and "*Die Wacht am Rhein*," which was the most popular. As I walked to and fro among the patriot crowd, I came to know many of the circling and returning faces by sight, and I still have clearly in mind the face of one young working woman who, with mouth that opened like a cavern, and with the rapt devotion of an ecstatic saint, was continuously chanting:

"Lieb Vaterland kann ruhig sein! (bis)
Fest steht und treu die Wacht,
Die Wacht am Rhein."

So she passed me by.

So the interminable crowds went past, a-tiptoe for war, because they had never known it. Sometimes a company of infantry, sometimes a squadron of horse went down the road westward, wearing the new grey uniforms in place of the familiar "Prussian blue." They passed to probable death amid cheering, handshaking, gifts of flowers and of food.

Sometimes the Kaiser in full uniform swept along in his fine motor, the chauffeur clearing the way by perpetually sounding the four notes which wicked Socialists interpreted as saying "*Das Volk bezahlt!*" ("The People pays!"). Cheered he was certainly, but everyone believed or knew that the Kaiser himself had never wished for war. He claimed the title of "Friedens-Kaiser," just as many have chosen to call our Edward VII "The Peace-Maker." The most mighty storm of cheering was reserved for the Crown Prince, known to be at variance with his father in longing to test his imagined genius on the field. Him the people cheered, for they had never known war.

HELD BY THE ENEMY

EVERY moment a new rumour whirled through the maddened city. Every hour a new edition of the papers appeared. All day long, and far through the night into the next day, I went backward and forward to the telegraph office, trying to send home all the descriptive news I could. How much of it went I never knew, but when at last I succeeded in reaching the head censor himself, he received me politely and said that in future I might telegraph in English instead of my German, if I came direct to him. I think he was too serious and too courteous to be mocking me, but telegrams had already ceased to run, and no more went.

On the morning of the fatal 4th, I drove to the Schloss, where the Deputies of the Reichstag were gathered to hear the Kaiser's address. Refused permission to enter, I waited outside, and gathered only rumours of the speech that declared the unity of all Germany and all German parties in face of the common peril. A few hours later, in the Reichstag, the Chancellor, Bethmann Hollweg, announced that under the plea of necessity the neutrality of Belgium had almost certainly already been violated. Then I knew that the long-dreaded moment had come . . .

In the afternoon I heard that our Ambassador, Sir Edward Goschen, had demanded his papers, and war was declared. I was at the Adlon, having been turned out of the Bristol the day before as a dangerous foreigner.

While I was dining I heard the yells of a crowd shouting outside our Embassy in the neighbouring street, and breaking the windows with loud crashes. Soon the noise came nearer, and in front of the hotel entrance I could distinguish shouts for the English correspondents to be brought out.

The wild outcries were chiefly directed against a prominent American correspondent who, in support of his London paper's policy, had been sending messages far from conciliatory. He and my colleague, who was acting with me for the *Daily News*, were given up to the police by the hotel director, and as I was passing into the front hall to see what was happening, he pointed me out as well. Two of the armed police seized me at once and dragged me out, holding an enormous revolver at each ear. "If you try to run away," they kept shouting, "we will shoot you like a dog!" To which I kept repeating in answer that, under such circumstances, I was not such a pure fool ("*reiner Narr*," a rapid reminiscence of Parsifal) as to try to run away. During this conversation they flung me out into the mob, who savagely set upon me with sticks, fists, and umbrellas. But I did not pay much attention to their onslaughts, for I had often suffered worse at Suffrage demonstrations.

Seated beside me, and holding the revolvers still in uncomfortable proximity to my skull, the police then took



SMILING YOUNG 'CONTEMPTIBLE': WAS HE THE FIRST SENTRY AT MONS?

The good humour and unfailing sense of fun that characterized the British Tommy throughout the war were of infinite value in maintaining the morale of the troops, and this young sentry's smile is typical of the spirit that endured to the end. This unique photograph was taken at 5 p.m. on August 22, 1914, only a few hours after the first cavalry patrols entered Mons. The sentry is an "Old Contemptible," private of the 4th Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own—"The Diehards"), which formed part of the 2nd Corps. He was posted when this photograph was taken at the crossing of the Mons–Beaumont/Mons–Binche roads, a spot known as La Bascule (*see* M. Licope's account in page 39).

Mons Museum



'FORGOTTEN MEN'—WHAT DOOM WAS THEIRS?

WAR'S final tragedy is neither national nor political, but domestic. Victory or defeat means but little to the woman who saw her fine, health-exhaling husband don his khaki and go forth to war, or maybe her son, to whom all the wonder of the coming years was just unfolding, taking the same road of destiny—to return no more. It was my lot to publish through all the war years thousands of photographs of these fathers and sons who went away to defend the liberal institutions of the great democracies from the envious onslaught of an aggressive nation that had made a trade of war, and I have never, in the quarter of a century that has passed since the first photographic record of the British Expeditionary Force arrived at my desk, been able to repress the feeling that first clutched at my heart: "How many of these fine men will ever return to sit at the table or the fireside with the wives and mothers they loved?" No man has seen more of war's pictorial documents than I, and yet that feeling persists after all these years, and it is because this photograph of brave men who went up to Mons in August 1914 stirs me as vividly as the first that I printed so long ago as August 20, 1914, that I feel it must stir others.

The Great War was not won by your Haigs or your Jellicoes, but by the indomitable spirit of these Forgotten Men, whom we see here resting on their way up to Mons on August 20, and it is a safe prophecy that whatever war the uncertain future may bring to Britain, fresh legions of just such men from British homes will endure through to victory—and oblivion.

In this new book we celebrate the glorious achievement of the Forgotten Men who saved Western Democracy from an arrogant yet subservient race driven on by war leaders insensate and bloodthirsty. What would have happened to us if *they* had won? J. A. H.


COMMERCIAL



HISTORIC JOURNEY: HUSSARS WHO WERE TO MEET DEATH OR GLORY AT MONS ARRIVE IN FRANCE

A large fleet of transports carried the original Expeditionary Force to France, mostly small ships of from 2,000 to 5,000 tons. The men were crowded together on the decks for the short crossing and the transports were escorted by warships. This historic and previously unpublished photograph shows the scene on one of these ships when she was nearing Havre, with the men crowding on the foc'sle and at the rail to get their first glimpse of France. They are N.C.O.'s and men of the 11th Hussars which formed part of the 1st Cavalry Brigade. A photograph showing a later stage of the same regiment's journey to the Concentration Area appears in page 54.

Imperial War Museum

me, with a Dutch correspondent, by taxi to the Praesidium, or central police court (a kind of Scotland Yard). There our treatment became more courteous, and after we had made our statements and shown our passports we were dismissed, with a note insuring protection. But as a scrap of paper seemed insufficient insurance against the fury of a mob inflamed, as German, British, French, and all mobs then were, by the raging patriotism of war, I demanded to be sent back protected as I had come.

So back in a taxi I was sent, though protected by only one policeman, who kept his revolver in a more respectful position, and convoyed me to the backdoor of the hotel, uttering mystic words at intervals when we had to pass through the cordons of cavalry drawn up for defence of our Embassy.

LAST FRIENDLY WORDS

On my return the director of the hotel was much moved, and wrung my hand with protestations of sorrow and regard, declaring that only by allowing his patriotism to supersede his reason had he charged me with instigating the war, which was absurd. The chambermaid was also much moved, refusing to be comforted because her three brothers and her lover were already on the march. So, imitating to myself the saying of the herald who proclaimed the beginning of the long war between Athens and Sparta—"This day sees the beginning of many sorrows for the most civilised peoples of the world"—I slept as best I could, and next morning I went about the city purchasing a few necessary things. All was quiet, and life seemed going on much as usual but for the excited crowds gathered round the newspaper offices, and the removal of all English and French names from the shops and banks. Even the sacred name of Cook was gone. In the evening, however, I received a kindly invitation from Sir Edward Goschen to come into the Embassy, which had been barricaded. As the Adlon was getting cleared for German officers, I gladly went, and was welcomed with amazing courtesy.

MY WAY OF ESCAPE

Before dawn on August 6 a string of motors was waiting outside the Embassy, sent by the Kaiser's orders to convey the Ambassador and his staff to a local station, a few miles away from Berlin. Again by the courtesy of Sir Edward Goschen, a few of us correspondents were invited to join the staff, and I hardly realized at the time from what a hideous destiny that invitation preserved me. I suppose I should have been kept shut up in Ruhleben or some similar camp for four and a half years; I should have seen nothing of the war in Belgium and France at its beginning; I should not have shared the splendour and the tragedy of the Dardanelles campaign; I should not have known the intrigues in Athens, or the disastrous uselessness of the early attempt at Salonika, or the meaning of the advance from Egypt upon Palestine; nor should I have been present at the final advance of the Allied Armies on the Western Front in August, 1918, or have heard the trumpet sound for the armistice in the market-square of Mons, or have accompanied our vanguard in the march up to the Rhine at Cologne. Of all those historic scenes I should have remained ignorant.

But from such loss our Ambassador saved me, and for twenty-four hours his train carried us all slowly lumbering through North Germany to the Dutch frontier.

On our way we passed or were impeded by uncounted vans decorated with boughs of trees and crammed with reservists going to the Belgian front. The men had now chalked "*Nach Bruxelles*" or "*Nach London*" as well as "*Nach Paris*" on the vans, and at every station they were met by bands of Red Cross girls bringing coffee, wine, and food.

At all the larger stations, too, the news of our train's approach had been signalled, and to cheer us on our way all the old men, boys and women of the place had flocked down with any musical instruments they could collect, and, standing thick on the platform, they played for us the German national tunes, "*Deutschland, Deutschland*" predominating. They played with the persistence of the "German bands" known to me in childhood. Sometimes, to impress their patriotism more distinctly upon us, they brought their instruments close up to the carriage windows, and the shifting tubes of the trombones came right into the carriage. Silent and unmoved, as an Englishman should, sat Sir Edward Goschen, looking steadily in front of him, with hands on his knees, making as though no sight or sound had reached his senses.

THEY CHEERED — FOR THEY KNEW NOT WAR

For Germany the first day of the Great War was August 1, 1914, when she declared war against Russia, and the news was received with enthusiasm by the people. Here is the scene outside the Imperial Palace, Berlin, to which huge crowds had marched through the streets cheering and singing "Deutschland ueber Alles."





THE GRAND FLEET CLEARS FOR ACTION IN THE NORTH SEA, AUGUST 1914

Here the Grand Fleet is seen steaming through the North Sea a day or two after the outbreak of war, on the way to its wartime base at Scapa. The ships are cleared for action, and are no longer so spick and span as they had been when they were reviewed by King George V at Spithead on July 18. This photograph was taken from the deck of H.M.S. " Audacious," which was mined and sunk off the coast of Ireland on October 27, a little over two months later. On her deck can be seen a smoking forge used in war for minor repairs that in peace would be done in dock.

Photo Cribb



ON THE THIRD DAY OF WAR THE DEADLY MINE TAKES ITS FIRST TOLL

On August 5, 1914, the 3rd destroyer flotilla from Harwich, led by Captain Fox in H.M.S. " Amphion," learned from a trawler that she had seen a strange ship dropping things overboard. The flotilla began a search for her, and the mine-layer " Königin Luise " was found making for the German coast. Her work was, however, done, for on the following day the " Amphion " struck one of the mines she had laid, and sank rapidly. Directly after the captain had left the ship she struck a second mine, and this drawing by Norman Wilkinson from a sketch by a naval officer in another ship shows the tragic ship striking the second mine. Of her crew 148 were killed.

MY FIRST DAYS AT WAR

by Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, G.C.B.

Commodore of the Submarine Service in 1914

IN 1914 Sir Roger Keyes, who later was to play such a distinguished part in command of the Dover Patrol, was in charge of the submarines. His name will ever be associated with the Dardanelles and the valiant naval actions at Zeebrugge and Ostend. Here he tells us of his earliest war experiences with the British Navy

IN October, 1913, it was decided, mainly in the interests of economy, not to have the usual naval manoeuvres in 1914, substituting in their place a test mobilisation of the Third Fleet; the cost of the latter being well covered by the economies which would be effected in fuel consumption.

This entailed the calling up of the reserves, some 20,000 officers and men, and the arrangements for their reception, kitting up, and drafting of such numbers, occupied the naval depots for some time beforehand. The ships of the Third Fleet, which were swinging round their buoys on the Mother Bank and elsewhere, with very small maintenance crews on board, were in the ordinary course by no means ready for service, and the dockyards were engaged for some months in thoroughly overhauling and refitting them, with the result that when orders were issued for the test mobilisation on July 10, and the fleets assembled at Spithead between July 13 and 17, the whole pre-war Navy was practically on a war footing, manned and in all respects ready for service.



ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET

Sir Roger Keyes was promoted Admiral of the Fleet in 1930. His interest in the men who served under him has never flagged, and he is here seen at a reunion of the R.N.V.R. at the Crystal Palace in 1938.

This was an amazing stroke of good fortune—or perhaps it was conscious or sub-conscious prevision on the part of the First Lord, who was entirely responsible for initiating this unprecedented innovation.

THE King was to have joined the fleet on July 17, but at the last moment his departure from London was postponed on account of the Irish situation, which was very serious. However, he arrived on the 18th, accompanied by Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, in time for a dinner party on board the "Victoria and Albert," to which I was invited.

I remember remarking that the King and Mr. Asquith were in very good spirits and that an air of optimism prevailed, which surprised me, as the Irish question seemed to have arrived at an absolute deadlock, but this was explained next day by the publication of His Majesty's appeal to all parties to confer at Buckingham Palace. On the 19th I dined on board the "Enchantress" with the First Lord and after dinner went on with Sir George Callaghan to the "Iron Duke," where I remained as his guest until July 25.

On the 20th the whole fleet sailed in single line ahead, passing close to the "Victoria and Albert" anchored off the Nab. His Majesty took the salute from each ship as she passed, after which he signalled his approval, concluding with the words, "I am proud of my Navy." I wrote a pencil note opposite this record less than a month later, "I hope he will be able to say the same at the end of the war."

I left the "Iron Duke" that day to spend a week-end at home at Fareham, with no thought of the European situation, but after reading the Sunday papers I had a most definite foreboding that war was upon us.



AS REAR ADMIRAL

Here is the author of this chapter as he was at the time when, under his command, the Dover Patrol won immortal fame.

The crews of the submarine flotillas were due to go on leave by watches on the following day. I gave orders that leave was not to commence until further notice, and went up to London by an early train on Monday to see the Chief of the War Staff, who gave me a message from the First Sea Lord, directing me to get the submarines ready for service directly the first watch returned from leave, the leave of the second watch to be postponed. Similar orders were issued to all destroyer flotillas. Prince Louis was much relieved when I told him that I had already stopped all leave, the submarines were fully manned and could proceed to their war stations at once. I then urged that the "Oversea" flotillas should be moved into the North Sea, and the Dover Patrol flotilla to its station, but could get no decision up to the time I left London that evening.

WHEN I reached home I found my wife and our Goodwood party were starting for a dance in a country house a few miles away. To my relief, orders had arrived for the submarines to proceed to their stations, and when all arrangements had been made I went to the dance about 11 p.m. feeling convinced that we were going to war, or at least if we did not, we would be *perfide Albion* indeed. Several officers were recalled from the dance to rejoin their units; one after another, submarine officers came up to my wife, to say good-bye and be wished God-speed. One has since heard the dance described as a miniature of the Duchess of Richmond's ball before Waterloo.

There was a curious tense atmosphere about that Goodwood party of soldiers, sailors and their womenfolk which is difficult to put into words, but of course no one had the remotest idea of the magnitude of the upheaval into which the world was heading. Tyrwhitt, who was there, received a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief ordering him to go to Portland as soon as possible. The next day he returned through Fareham, on his way to Portsmouth, having telegraphed me to meet him, in order that he might hand me a secret packet from Sir George Callaghan, containing the Eighth Flotilla's war orders.

THAT evening Sir George telegraphed me to meet him at the Admiralty the following morning, Wednesday, July 29. I did not see my home again until I returned from the Eastern Mediterranean in June, 1916, except for a few hours in October, 1914, and a few days in November, 1915.

I spent some time with Sir George Callaghan, under whose orders the Eighth Flotilla (" Oversea " submarines) was to operate in the event of war. Later in the day (July 29) I learnt, much to my annoyance, that owing to some misunderstanding the Eighth Flotilla had been ordered to the Humber, instead of its proper war station at Harwich. The former was, in my opinion, thoroughly unsuitable for its base, and I asked permission to move it at once. I was told that I could, subject to the Commander-in-Chief's approval; I did not succeed in getting into touch with him until about 10 p.m., when he gave me a free hand to do what I wished. I just had time to catch the last train to Grimsby that night and arrived there at 5 a.m., then went on by workmen's train to Immingham, where I found the " Maidstone," " Adamant," and ten " D " and " E " class submarines. I hoisted my broad pennant in the " Maidstone " and took the whole flotilla to Harwich, where we arrived safely on July 31, much to my relief. The " Maidstone " carried spare torpedoes and parts of machinery for all the " Oversea " submarines, and was invaluable as a base for the Eighth Flotilla. Her loss would have been a very serious matter, and I did not wish to risk her at sea after the outbreak of war; besides, however remote, one could not disregard the possibility of a stroke before the declaration of war, such as the Japanese attack on the Russian fleet off Port Arthur.

On the evening of August 4 I received the signal that an ultimatum had been given to Germany which expired at midnight. I assembled all the officers and men of the submarines and informed them we would be at war in a couple of hours, told them briefly the cause of the war, and said I felt that all they had done in the way of fitting themselves for service by taking war risks during the past three years, would now be rewarded. They gave a tremendous cheer.

. . . . . .

ADMIRAL CAMPBELL, who was under way in the " Bacchante," with the " Aboukir " and " Euryalus " in company, asked me to meet him off the Kentish Knock, and I went on board to make the final arrangements for his submarine escort. The weather was wet and beastly, the " Bacchante " was incredibly dirty, having left the dockyard immediately after taking in stores, ammunition and coal, and I found the atmosphere rather depressing. Algy Boyle (afterwards Admiral Sir Algernon Boyle) was quite untouched by his surroundings, and when I next went on board the " Bacchante " she had " found herself." While I was on board, a wireless message was received which was reported as " Third Flotilla engaging scouting cruisers." As support might be required, I returned to the "Lurcher" and steamed full speed to the northward, in order to try to lay the submarines on to the enemy. It was, however, a false alarm due to a coding error. The vessel engaged was the " Königin Luise," which was sunk by the " Amphion " and some of her flotilla, after she had laid a number of mines. It turned out afterwards that she intended to pass as a Hook of Holland–Harwich packet and lay mines off Harwich, but, on sighting the destroyers, had turned to the N.E. and then north, laying her mines as fast as possible in the open sea, nowhere near our territorial waters.

On the morning of August 6 the German Ambassador and his staff arrived by train and embarked for the Hook of Holland in the G.E.R. packet " St. Petersburg." I asked the Marine Superintendent to instruct the captain to manoeuvre his ship as if he were passing through intricate channels in a minefield. I was told later that he played his part very realistically and greatly intrigued the German Naval Attaché.

. . . . . .

'AMPHION' SUNK

DURING the night of the 5th–6th the " Amphion " reported that she was returning at about 9 a.m. with her flotilla and about 20 prisoners of war. But, about an hour after she was due, a signal was received from Captain Fox of the " Amphion " that he was in the " Llewellyn " and had important news to communicate; on this we could put only one interpretation, which was confirmed when the War Signal Station reported that the flotilla was in sight without the " Amphion." Shortly afterwards it was reported that the destroyers had turned and were apparently engaging an enemy. It appeared that the " St. Petersburg," carrying the German Ambassador, looked exactly like the " Königin Luise," and, as she was flying a large German flag, the flotilla rushed at her open-mouthed, which was not surprising, as they had just seen their Captain, to whom they were devoted, lose his ship on a mine laid by the " Königin Luise." Luckily they were stopped by Fox, but they seriously alarmed the Embassy party, and the German flag came down like a rocket stick.

QUICK WORK BY THE SILENT SERVICE—THE FIRST PRIZE

The first capture of an enemy ship was made five minutes after Britain's ultimatum to Germany had expired on August 4, when the German barque " Roland " of Bremen was taken by a British light cruiser off the Scilly Isles. She is here seen on the following morning being towed into port by her captor with a prize crew, and the White Ensign flying from her mizzen mast.



BIRTH of a WORLD SONG

by George C. Curnock

A Correspondent of the 'Daily Mail' in France 1914–1918

GEORGE Curnock, a famous war correspondent, was in Boulogne when the secret landing of the 'Old Contemptibles' was taking place. He describes that moving scene and relates how the strains of 'Tipperary' resounding through the ancient streets gave immortality to that simple song

WHEN I decided to spend my summer holiday at Hardelot, a little *plage* near Boulogne, in July and August, 1914, I little thought that it would end in the writing of despatches recording the landing of the first British troops and the first singing in France of "Tipperary," the soldiers' song of the Great War.

Our first forecast of war came when Germans of military age packed their trunks and took their children from the sands of Hardelot. I realised during that last week of July that the war, so long anticipated, was coming at last. In forty-eight hours the invasion of Belgium began. By wire I sought, and obtained, my Editor's permission to remain in France as correspondent of the "Daily Mail" at Boulogne.

I found Boulogne seething with emotion. Reservists were pouring in from the countryside. Among the English who remained, as I did, there was one consuming topic of conversation: "Would England come in?" On August 4 the die was cast. England came in. The only question then was: "When will they come over?"

A deep veil of secrecy, hiding Britain's intentions, was partially rent when a number of French officers arrived, very smart in their uniforms of cavalry, artillery, engineers, and the line, and turned me out of my comfortable quarters in the Hotel Christol, facing the harbour.

The same evening, having found a refuge in Boulogne's little Hotel Metropole, I met these French officers on the terrace of the town's smartest café. To my surprise they all spoke English with a fluency which betokened long acquaintance with the language. They were, I soon discovered, interpreters detailed for service with the British troops. My luck was in. We in Boulogne were to see the arrival of the first British troops on French soil, the first to land, horse, foot and artillery, for one hundred years. 1815–1914—how the pendulum of time had swung in one hundred years!

Nearly a quarter of a century has passed, but still I think with emotion of these Frenchmen leaving their homes, their friends, their sport, and their business in England to help British troops to fight for France and Belgium.

Hardly a month was to pass before one at least was to give his life riding and fighting with English cavalry at Thulin in Belgium—a gallant officer, the Vicomte de Vauvineux, known to many in English society of that day. Another, Captain Letourey, French master at Blundell's School at Tiverton in Devon, riding by the vicomte's side with the 9th Lancers, escaped death in that wonderful charge when Lancers, Dragoons and Hussars, forming the Second Cavalry Brigade, charged the German guns as Letourey afterwards told me, "singing and shouting like schoolboys." Letourey's horse was shot under him. What happened to the rest of the interpreters with whom I had spent so many pleasant evenings in Boulogne I never heard.

ONE was a Birkenhead and Liverpool cotton merchant, another had spent years with his shipping firm in Newcastle, another practised at the English bar, another had hunted for years with the Pytchley, another was a man of leisure, and the eighth of this little band was a former attaché at the French Embassy in London. Peace to their



THE MEN WHO SANG

Such men as these, seen marching through a French village, sang the immortal "Tipperary" as they went forward to meet the enemy.

memory; they were the first to help the English on French soil.

Apart from staff officers and Army Service men, who came to prepare the way, but, like everyone else, had their fill of fighting before the war ended, the first fighting unit to land was a detachment of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. How strong and sturdy, sunburned and gay they looked, khaki-clad, but kilted, with knees bare and pipes skirling. Among my Hardelot acquaintances was a nephew of that old Scottish golfer "Andra" Kirkaldy.

Himself a golf professional with the Hardelot club, the younger Kirkaldy had served in his youth with the A. and S., and nothing could stop him from joining up again when he heard the pipes and saw the lads. The battalion doctor rejected him daily—peace-time rules regarding teeth and other impediments to perfect manhood still held good—but the colonel took him. All Boulogne "belonged" to Kirkaldy when he was allowed to join again. His joy was great; his glory brief. Before Christmas came Kirkaldy's name was on another Roll of Honour.

SIX long days passed. And then the British came, heralded by a notice on the walls of Boulogne which put the old town into a fervour of anticipation. Signed at the Hôtel de Ville on August 10, 1914, by Felix Adam, the Mayor, and countersigned by a grizzled veteran of the War of 1870, Daru, Military Governor, this notice read as follows:

ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH TROOPS

Appeal to the Inhabitants

My dear Citizens,—This day arrive in our town the valiant British troops, who come to co-operate with our brave soldiers to repel the abominable aggression of Germany. So, before the invasion of the barbarians, all Europe rose against the like race who menaced the peace of the world and the security of other people.

Boulogne, which is one of the homes of the Entente Cordiale, will give to the sons of the United Kingdom an enthusiastic and brotherly welcome. The citizens are requested on this occasion to decorate the fronts of their houses with the colours of the two countries.

Boulogne burst into a display of bunting. The flags of Great Britain,



HE MADE 'TIPPERARY'

Jack Judge, the composer of "Tipperary," was a market stall holder in 1914, and the song was the result of a bet. He made large sums from that famous melody and received a generous pension from the publishers. He died in 1938.

France and Belgium were everywhere on the houses and across the streets. There were sad hearts and grave faces among many who put out the flags, for already the 8th Boulonnais Regiment had called up its reservists and sent them away to Belgium, with a kiss and a prayer for each, and the rumour that the regiment had been hard hit in the bloody fighting in the north was rife.

The 10th of August, 1914, was a Monday. More than a week was to pass—so strict was the censorship—before the British public was allowed to know what we in Boulogne were going crazy about. On Monday night, August 17, at 9.45 p.m., the official Press Bureau in London issued the following notice, which sent a great thrill throughout England and, indeed, the whole world:

The Expeditionary Force as detailed for Foreign Service has been safely landed on French soil.

The embarkation, transportation, and disembarkation of men and stores were alike carried through with the greatest precision, and without a single casualty.

"Without a single casualty"—the phrase was hardly to be used again during four long years.

So they came. Down at the Bassin Loubet I saw the ships of every burden from Atlantic liners to coasting craft pouring out their living freight and the spotless equipment which came with it: shining guns and polished leather, so soon to be camouflaged with the mud of Flanders.

THE Middlesex Regiment was one of the first. Many said they had never seen a finer battalion of the line. Every man was in fighting trim, seasoned and hard as nails. Reservists were there in amazing numbers, many wearing the South African Boer War ribbon. One tough-looking, bald-headed private told me he came from "'Oxton," and that he lived next to the "Prince of Wales's Fevvers"; what he was going to do to the Kaiser and the whole German army hardly bears repetition.

As these Londoners passed the railings of the depot behind which the Argyll and Sutherlandshire detachment were clustered, the kilties from Scotland hurled at them their old football cry: "Are we downhearted?" And back came the thunderous roar: "No-o-o!" Boulogne caught the phrase, and the next day as battalion after battalion of Worcesters, Royal Scots, Gordons, Highland Light Infantry, and Connaught Rangers, and many another famous regiment landed, the townspeople called it again. But Oxford and Bucks varied the cry with their own slogan: "Shall we win?" and back came the answer: "Y-e-e-e-s!"

On Thursday, August 13, came Boulogne's great day. In glorious sunshine the British troops, hitherto quartered in and around the docks, made a set march through the town to their camps on the hills. To watch them pass we took our places on the doorstep of the Hotel Metropole. Beside me stood Madame and her three little children, clothed in the deepest mourning. Rumour had spoken too truly of the fate of the town's reservists. Her husband and the children's father had gone with the 8th Boulonnais, never to return. "Dead on the Field of Honour," was the official message.



UNWILLING PASSENGER

Forty thousand horses went to France with the British Army in August 1914. Those which would not walk quietly ashore by the gangway were slung from deck to quay with a derrick, like this one.

Enthusiasm redoubled on both sides as the men passed on foot while their officers rode quietly between. Company after company, battalion after battalion, they swung up the Rue Faidherbe and the steep Grande Rue shouting their slogans, whistling and singing their songs. How familiar the songs were. I had heard them often when these regiments came back from the Boer War: "The soldiers of the Queen, my lads! Who've seen, my lads." And now the great old Queen was gone and George V reigned in her stead; but still they sang it, with "Good-bye, Dolly, I must leave you."

What men they were! "Not a youth or a stripling among them," I wrote in The Daily Mail. "Their shirts are open at the front, and as they shout you can see the working of the muscles of their throats, their wide-open mouths and rows of dazzling teeth."

English and French alike rejoiced in the sight. But Madame remained silent, watching and thinking of Flanders and days to come. For an hour she said not a word. Then quietly she turned to me, as a company of the 2nd Battalion Connaught Rangers passed us singing, with a note of strange pathos in their rich Irish voices, a song I had never heard before.

As she turned, "Monsieur," she said, "what is it they are singing?"

"Madame," said I, "it is a song new to me—a popular air, as we say, of the music-hall."

"But the words?" she replied. "Tell me the words."

Again I listened as another company of the Connaught Rangers passed us, still singing their plaintive ballad.

"They sing," I said,

"'It's a long way to Tipperary, It's a long way to go . . .'"

Catching her throat with a sudden, impulsive gesture, seeming to choke a rising sob, she answered:

"Ah! The poor boys! . . . 'A long, long way' . . . they do not know how long is the way they are going . . . how long—how long!"

She was again silent, and then, mistress of her own grief, she added: "It makes me sick at heart to see so many fine men marching to the war. They are so full of life. Never have I seen such splendid men. Oh, but they are brave—to go laughing."

WHEN, that afternoon, I came to write this story of the landing and this march, I set aside the old songs and named only this one sung by the Connaught Rangers. To me it seemed to fill and complete the picture as no other song could do. When it arrived in London, the Censor, cutting out a great deal, allowed this story of "Tipperary" to pass. The "Daily Mail" printed it, and gave "Tipperary" in a few hours world-wide fame.

From that day, August 18, 1914, "Tipperary" was played and sung everywhere, even in Germany. Chinese, brought to France for work behind the lines, had their version. Every soldier of Kitchener's army sang it on route march, and landed in France singing it. "Tipperary" was played second to our National Anthem in France and Belgium throughout the war, and is still played in both countries on every occasion in which British soldiers figure, as on the Dedication of the Menin Gate. Canada set her own words to the tune, and though the American troops when they came had their song, "Tipperary" penetrated to every State, as it did to every British Dominion.

After that first great march the troops passed daily to their camps on the hills, the very sites on which Napoleon's army for the invasion of England had camped not much more than 100 years before. Then came the day when our troopships went elsewhere than to Boulogne Harbour. Mons had been fought; the combined armies of France and England were southwards on the Marne, and beyond. Only a few poor broken men of the thousands we had seen came back to Boulogne. The camps were deserted. Not a man of military age remained in the town except the gendarmes. Boulogne was an open town. The guns of 1870 were taken from the castle walls.

With my colleague of "The Times," I remained at the little Hotel Metropole. Not a soldier of the Allied Forces stood between us and the Germans. Each night we said, "To-morrow the Uhlans will be here"; each morning we expected to be awakened by the sound of their horses' hoofs clattering over that same granite roadway which had resounded so recently and so bravely to the march of the British troops.



FRENCH'S FIRST SALUTE TO HIS FRENCH ALLIES

While transport after transport was taking the original British Expeditionary Force, the best equipped army that ever left Britain, across the Channel, Field-Marshal Sir John French crossed to France on board a destroyer, H.M.S. Sentinel. He is here seen landing at Boulogne from the "Sentinel" at 5 p.m. on August 14, 1914.

ONE English officer, a major in the Reserves, alone remained at the Hotel Christol. The coolest man in Boulogne. "Will they reach Paris?" I asked him one morning. "No," said he, "the French will take care of that!"

"But how can they be stopped?" I asked.

"When they learn to do what we had to do in South Africa."

"And that was?"

"To dig in," he replied, "fighting in the open is no good nowadays. You must go underground. No troops can stand in the open against modern gunfire."

And so it was. After the Battle of the Ourcq, which saved Paris, and the Battle of the Marne, which drove the Germans to the banks of the Aisne, both sides "dug in."

The first phase was over.

SECTION II

Mons: The Going Up to Battle

Aug. 9 — Aug. 23, 1914

FROM the ports of Havre and Boulogne the gallant units of the British Expeditionary Force made their way to the historic battlefield of Mons. They had left England in complete secrecy and reached their goal without casualty. In this section four brilliant writers tell the stories as eye-witnesses of the approach of the B.E.F. to the greatest war of all times. ¶ Captain Gyde, of the South Staffordshire Regiment, relates the moving incidents of the journey to the front amidst the shouts and joy of the French and Belgian civilians. ¶ Colonel Osburn, a medical officer of the 4th Dragoon Guards, Major Corbett-Smith, distinguished author and officer of the Royal Artillery, and Corporal J. F. Lucy give from three different points of observation the most thrilling accounts of the immortal battle of Mons.

★9 August 17–22, 1914

MY ROAD to ADVENTURE

by Capt. Arnold Gyde



CAPTAIN GYDE

As a member of the original British Expeditionary Force, Captain Arnold Gyde was a second-lieutenant commanding No. 7 Platoon, B Company, 2nd Battalion South Staffordshire Regiment.

AFTER about two days' stay, the Battalion moved away from the rest camp and, setting out before dawn, marched back through those fatal streets of Havre, this time deserted in the moonlight, to a sort of shed, called by the French authorities a troop station. Here as usual the train was waiting, and the men had but to be put in. The carriages could not be called luxurious; to be frank, they were cattle-trucks. But it takes more than that to damp the spirits of Mr. Thomas Atkins. Cries imitating the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep broke out from the trucks!

The train moved out of the depot and wended its way in the most casual manner through the streets of Havre. This so amused Tommy that he roared with laughter. The people who rushed to give the train a send-off, with many cries of "*Vive les Anglais*," "*A bas les Boches*," were greeted with more bleatings and brayings.

The journey through France was quite uneventful. Sleeping or reading the whole day through, the subaltern only remembered Rouen, passed at about midday, and Amiens later in the evening. The train had paused at numerous villages on its way, and in every case there had been violent demonstrations of enthusiasm. In one case a young lady of prepossessing appearance had thrust her face through the window, and talked very excitedly and quite incomprehensibly, until one of the fellows in the carriage grasped the situation, leant forward, and did honour to the occasion. The damsel retired blushing.

At Amiens various rumours were afloat. Somebody had heard the colonel say the magic word "Liége." Pictures of battles to be fought that very night thrilled some of them not a little.

Dawn found the Battalion hungry, shivering and miserable, paraded by the side of the track, at a little wayside station called Wassigné. The train shunted away, leaving the Battalion with a positive feeling of desolation. A staff officer, rubbing sleep from his eyes, emerged from a little "estaminet" and gave the colonel the necessary orders. During the march that ensued the Battalion passed through villages where the three other regiments in the Brigade were billeted. At length a village called Iron was reached, and their various billets were allotted to each Company. The subaltern's



TAKE YOUR SEATS FOR THE FRONT

This train carried the 11th Hussars, which formed part of the original B.E.F., to the Concentration Area at Rouen on August 18, 1914. On the platform are some of the officers. Left to right are Lieut. R. R. C. Baggallay, who ended the war in command of a battalion of the Guards; Lieut. E. V. Drake, who at the end of the war was Major, Cavalry Brigade, and Lieut. H. C. H. Hudson, who at the end of the war was a Lieut.-Colonel on the G.H.Q. Staff.

Imperial War Museum

Company settled down in a huge water-mill ; its officers being quartered in the miller's private house. A wash, a shave and a meal worked wonders.

And so the journey was finished, and the Battalion found itself at length in the theatre of operations.

THE Battalions which composed the First Expeditionary Force had been spread in small groups over the whole length and breadth of Britain. They had been mobilized, embarked, piloted across the Channel in the face of an undefeated enemy fleet, rested, and trained to their various areas of concentration, to take their place by the side of their French Allies.

All this was accomplished without a single hitch, and with a speed that was astonishing.

Peace reigned for the next five days, the last taste of careless days that so many of those poor fellows were to have.

A route march generally occupied the mornings, and a musketry parade the evenings. Meanwhile, the men were rapidly accustoming themselves to the new conditions. The officers occupied themselves with polishing up their French, and getting a hold upon the reservists who had joined the Battalion on mobilization.

The French did everything in their power to make the Battalion at home. Cider was given to the men in buckets. The officers were treated like the best friends of the families with whom they were billeted. The fatted calf was not spared, and this in a land where there were not too many fatted calves.

The Company " struck a particularly soft spot." The miller had gone to the war leaving behind him his wife, his mother and two children. Nothing they could do for the five officers of the Company was too much trouble. Madame Mère resigned her bedroom to the major and his second in command, while Madame herself slew the fattest of her chickens and rabbits for the meal of her hungry officers.





HAPPY DAYS—TRAGIC MEMORIES

Flowers and fruit were showered on the British Tommies as they moved towards the front, and such a happy incident is seen above. Left, is the Mill at Iron (see text), burned down and rebuilt since the " subaltern's " time. Tragedy followed those happy days for the former owner's wife was sentenced to death for harbouring about a dozen British soldiers. The soldiers were shot, and the woman, since dead, was imprisoned.

THE talk that was indulged in must have been interesting, even though the French was halting and ungrammatical. Of all the companies' messes, this one took the most serious view of the future, and earned the nickname " Les Misérables." The senior subaltern said that this calm preceded a storm. The papers they got—*Le Petit Parisien* and such-like—talked vaguely of a successful offensive on the extreme right : Mulhouse, it was said, had



LAST CAMP BEFORE MONS: HOW MANY MUSTERED AFTER?

Here are shown some of the men of the original British Expeditionary Force leaving a base camp soon after landing in France. The B.E.F. was the best equipped British Army that had ever taken the field, and the white bell tents seen in the background were in strange contrast to the conditions they were to face later when a dug-out in a swamped trench was their only home. The men are standing at ease during the taking of a parade state before they began the long trek to meet the Germans at Mons. Many of them are easily recognizable by comrades and families.

been taken. But of the left, of Belgium, there was silence. Such ideas as the subaltern himself had on the strategical situation were but crude. The line of battle, he fancied, would stretch north and south, from Mulhouse to Liége. If it were true that Liége had fallen, he thought the left would rest successfully on Namur. The English Army, he imagined, was acting as "general reserve," behind the French line, and would not be employed until the time had arrived to hurl the last reserve into the mêlée, at the most critical point.

And all the while, never a sound of firing, never a sight of the red and blue of the French uniforms. The war might have been two hundred miles away!

Meanwhile Tommy on his marches was discovering things. Wonder of wonders, this curious people called "baccy" tabac! "And if yer wants a bit of bread yer awsks for pain, strewth!" He loved to hear the French gabble to him in their excited way; he never thought that reciprocally his talk was just as funny. The French matches earned unprintable names. But on the whole he admired sunny France, with its squares of golden corn and vegetables, and when he passed a painted Crucifix, with its cluster of flowering graves, he would say: "Golly, Bill, ain't it pretty? We oughter 'ave them at 'ome, yer know." And of course he kept on saying what he was going to do with "Kayser Bill."

ONE night the men of the Company gave a little concert outside the mill. The flower-scented twilight was fragrantly beautiful, and the mill stream gurgled a lullaby accompaniment as it swept past the trailing grass. Nor was there any lack of talent. One reservist, a miner since he had left the Army, roared out several songs concerning the feminine element at the seaside, or voicing an inquiry as to a gentleman's companion on the previous night. Then, with an entire lack of appropriateness, another got up and recited "The Wreck of the 'Titanic'" in a most touching and dramatic manner. Followed a song with a much-appreciated chorus:

"Though your heart may ache awhile,
Never mind!
Though your face may lose its smile,
Never mind!
For there's sunshine after rain,
And then gladness follows pain,
You'll be happy once again,
Never mind!"

The ditty deals with broken vows, and faithless hearts, and blighted lives; just the sort of song that Tommy loves to warble after a good meal in the evening. It conjured to the subaltern's eyes the picture of the dainty little star who had sung it on the boards of the "Coliseum." And to conclude, Madame's voice, French, and sonorously metallic, was heard in the dining-room striking up the "Marseillaise." Tommy did not know a word of it, but he yelled "March on" (a very good translation of "Marchons") and sang "lar-lar" to the rest of the tune.

Thus passed peacefully enough those five days—the calm before the storm.

The Battalion had arrived at Iron on a Sunday morning. It had rested there, while the remainder of the British Army was being concentrated, until Friday morning. On Thursday night the Battalion Orders made it clear that a start was to be made. Parade was to be earlier than usual, and nothing was to be left behind. Everyone was very sorry to be leaving their French friends, and there were great doings that night. Champagne was produced, and a horrible sort of liquor called "alcohol" was introduced into the coffee. Such was the generosity of the miller's people that it was only with the greatest difficulty that the captain induced Madame to accept any payment for her kindness.

MARCHING TOWARDS MONS

AND so in the chill of that Friday morning the Battalion marched away, not without many hand-shakings and blessings from the simple villagers. The subaltern often wonders what became of Mesdames, and that excitable son Raoul, and charming Thérèse, whom the subalterns had all insisted on kissing before they left.

The Battalion joined its Brigade, and the Brigade its Division, and before the sun was very high in the sky they were swinging along the "route nationale," due northwards. The day was very hot, and the Battalion was hurried, with as short halts as possible, towards Landrecies. As, however, this march was easily surpassed in "frightfulness" by many others, it will be enough to say that Landrecies was reached in the afternoon.

Having seen his men as comfortable as possible in the schools where they were billeted for the night, the subaltern threw off his equipment, and having bought as much chocolate as he and a friend could lay their hands on, retired to his room and lay down.

At about seven o'clock in the evening the three subalterns made their way to the largest hotel in the town, where they found the rest of the Mess already assembled at dinner. He often remembered this meal afterwards, for it was the last that he had properly served for some time. In the middle of it the colonel was summoned hastily away by an urgent message, and before they dispersed to their billets the unwelcome news was received that Battalion parade was to be at three o'clock next morning.

"This," said he, "is the real beginning of the show. Henceforth, horribleness."

A hunk of bread eaten during the first stage of the march was all the breakfast he could find. Maroilles, a suburb of Landrecies, was passed, and an hour later a big railway junction. The march seemed to be directed on Maubeuge, but a digression was made to the north-west, and finally a halt was called at a tiny village called Hargnies. The subaltern's men were billeted in a large barn opening on to an orchard.

AFTER a scrap meal he pulled out some maps to study the country which lay before them, and what should meet his eye but the field of Waterloo, with all its familiar names: Charleroi, Ligny, Quatrebras, Genappe, the names which he had studied a year ago at Sandhurst. Surely these names of the victory of ninety-nine years ago were a good omen!

A horrible rumour went about that another move was to be made at five o'clock the same evening, but this hour was subsequently altered to two o'clock the next morning. That night a five-franc postal order was given to every man as part of his pay.

Even in the height of summer there is always a feeling of ghostliness about nocturnal parades. The darkness was intense. As might be expected, the men had not by any means recovered from the heat and exertion of the previous day, and were not in the best of tempers. The subaltern himself was so tired that he had to lie down on the cold road at each hourly halt of ten minutes, and, with his cap for a pillow, sleep soundly for at least eight of those minutes. Then whistles were sounded ahead, the men would rise wearily and shuffle on their equipment with the single effort that is the hall-mark of a well-trained soldier. The captain, passing along the Company, called his attention to the village they were passing. It was Malplaquet. The grey light of dawn revealed large open fields. "I expect this is where they fought it out," said the captain.

KEEPING a close eye upon the map, he could tell almost to a hundred yards where the boundary of Belgium crossed the road. A few miles farther, a halt for breakfast was ordered, as it was about eight o'clock. The colonel called for Company Commanders, and while they were away Sir John French,



BRITISH HEROES TWICE PASSED THIS WAY

Across the frontier between France and Belgium, seen above, British Armies marched at an interval of over 200 years. The first time was in September, 1709, when Marlborough's army beat the French at the battle of Malplaquet, and went on to capture Mons. In August, 1914, British troops marched across the same battlefield and on to fight the glorious, but losing, battle of Mons. In the photograph (left) British artillery is seen on August 22, 1914, passing the French memorial to " the brave of both nations " who fell in 1709.

Photos : above, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd. ; left, Major H. A. Stewart, D.S.O.



followed by Sir Archibald Murray and a few members of the General Staff, passed by in motors.

AMONGST the hundred and one pictures that the subaltern will always carry in his mind of the opening stages of the campaign, this one stands out most vividly. The sun was shining, but it was still cool. On the right of the road was a thick forest of young firs ; on the left, a row of essentially suburban villas were being built, curiously out of place in that agricultural district. The men were sitting on the banks of the road or clustered round the " cookers," drawing their breakfast rations of bread and cold bacon. Then the major came back. There was an expression on his face that showed he was well aware of the dramatic part he was about to play.

Imagine him standing by the wayside, surrounded by his officers, two sergeant-majors, and some half-dozen senior sergeants, all with pencils ready poised to write his orders in their Field Service note-books. There was a pause of several seconds. The major seemed to be at a loss quite how to begin. " There's a lot that I needn't mention, but this is what concerns this Company," he said, with a jerk. " When we reach " (here he mentioned a name which the subaltern has long since forgotten), " we have to deploy to the left, and search the village of Harmigné to drive the enemy from it, and take up a position—— "

It was a blow. Officers were frowning over their note-books as if afraid they had not heard correctly. The enemy here, in the western corner of Belgium ? The major's orders petered out. They saluted and returned to their platoons, feeling puzzled and a little shaken.

The subaltern had come to this campaign with such fresh hopes of victory. This was not to have been a repetition of '70 ! France would not have gone to war unless she had been strong and ready. Inspired with the spirit of the First Republic, the French Armies, they had told themselves, would surge forward in a wave of victory and beat successfully against the crumbling sands of the Kaiser's military monarchy—Victory, drenching Germany with the blood of her sons, and adding a lustre to the Sun of Peace that should never be dimmed by the black clouds of Militarism ! And all this was not to be ? He had never even heard that Liége had fallen, let alone Brussels, and here were the Germans apparently right round the Allied flank. It was astounding, irritating.

In a vague way he felt deceived and staggered. It was a disillusionment ! If the Germans were across the Sambre, the French could scarcely launch their victorious attack on the Rhine.

The excitement dispelled his fatigue, but the men were openly incredulous. " The ruddy 'Oolans 'ere a'ready ? They're only tellin' us that, to make us march ! " The first fight ! How would it turn out ? How would the men shape ? Could the ammunition supply be depended upon ? But, above all, what would he be like ? Would he feel afraid ? If so, would he be able to hide it ? Would his men follow him well ? Perhaps he might be wounded (parts of him shrank from the thought), or killed. No, somehow he felt it was impossible that he would be killed. These and a thousand more such questions flashed through his brain as the march continued northwards.

THE hourly halts were decreased from ten to about three minutes. The excitement of the future dissolved the accumulating fatigue of the three days. The very weight of his sword and haversack was forgotten.

It was Sunday morning. The bells of the village churches were ringing, and the women and children, decked in their Sunday best, were going calmly to church, just as if the greatest battle that, up to then, history had ever seen were not about to be fought around their very homesteads.

A waterworks was passed, and at last the cross-roads were reached. There was a wait while the Battalion in front of them deployed. Officers were loading their revolvers.

They threw aside a hastily improvised barricade of ploughshares, and hurried on to the village which was to be their especial care in the impending battle, known rather inadequately as " Mons."

OUR TROOPS REACH MONS

A Great Moment of History

By Georges Licope

Curator, Mons War Museum

M. GEORGES LICOPE, who, with M. Léon Pepin, founded the War Museum at Mons, has a unique story to tell, for as a boy of fourteen he was in the garden of his house when a British cavalry patrol was first sighted. These Lancers were the earliest British troops to be welcomed by the Belgian inhabitants of the suburbs of Mons, and M. Licope describes in thrilling fashion the scenes of enthusiasm which their arrival evoked. They are seen in the hitherto unpublished photograph given in page 2

FRIDAY, August 21, 1914—a glorious summer's day, blazing with sunshine, as if Nature were intent on revealing all her splendour.

The civilized world, in a torment of anxiety, turned its gaze towards that ancient land of Belgium, where, once again, the destiny of Europe was to be decided. Already the eastern half of the country was under the heel of the enemy, and King Albert's little army, after having waged a lone struggle for eighteen long days against an enemy a hundredfold stronger in numbers and material, was withdrawing slowly upon the fort of Antwerp.

At Mons, capital of the province of Hainaut, close by the ancient battlefield of Malplaquet, where the Duke of Marlborough had won fame two centuries before, the war had not yet made itself felt, and the inhabitants awaited anxiously to know their fate.

From early morning alarming news had spread from mouth to mouth: Brussels had been occupied the previous evening, and Uhlans had been sighted at Manage, some sixteen miles north-east of Mons.

The Garde Civique had been on a war footing since the beginning of August, and was holding the bridges and cross-roads on all the highways leading into the town. This force, corresponding in some degree to the French Garde Nationale, or the English Yeomanry, was composed of men who had not served in the army. Armed with Comblain single-shot rifles, firing a leaden bullet, this corps could not be utilized in war time, except for service in the rear, because of its obsolete equipment.

The Garde Civique, only active in peace time in the towns, assembled



FOUNDER OF MONS MUSEUM

The war relics in the Mons Museum have been got together chiefly by the director, M. Georges Licope. He saw the British troops enter Mons in August 1914, and the Canadians re-enter it on November 11, 1918.



HEART OF THE COCKPIT OF EUROPE

In its long history the ancient town of Mons has seen much of war, for between 1572 and 1792 it was six times besieged. The last and most famous of the battles with which it is associated left it almost unscathed. It was in German hands until November 11, 1918, when Canadian troops re-entered it. The Grand' Place (seen below) today is much as it was in 1914. The building with a tower is the 15th-century town hall in which the Mons Museum is housed.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

every Sunday on the parade ground or at the rifle range, and these displays were either a relaxation or an imposition, according to whether the citizens who took part in them were martially or peacefully inclined. The manoeuvres invariably ended at the café, where a few pints of good Belgian beer put everybody into high spirits.

On that particular morning, however, a company of the Garde Civique of La Louvière had come to reinforce that of Mons, and occupied " La Bascule," an important strategic point at which the roads from Mons to Binche and Charleroi, and to Givry and Beaumont, crossed about a mile and a half south-east of the town on the northern slopes of Panisel Hill.

Sentries had been stationed all along these roads, and were conscientiously scanning the horizon whilst their comrades made themselves comfortable and slaked their thirst at the " Belle Vue " café.

Suddenly I noticed, about six or seven hundred yards away, a cloud of dust approaching swiftly along the Beaumont road from the south-east. Indisputably it was caused by galloping cavalry. A few seconds later I could clearly make out lances and khaki silhouettes wearing flat service caps, and galloping at full tilt.

The sentry missed no detail of this. He hid behind a big elm tree, loaded his rifle, and waited.

Who could these strange horsemen be, armed with lances and coming from the direction of the Ardennes, but German Uhlans ? They certainly weren't Belgian Lancers, and I for one was not aware then that the French army included any regiments of lancers.

The sentry methodically took aim with his rifle. In another few seconds a shot would have rung out.

Suddenly the horses stopped dead, the leaders drawing up on their haunches —but the riders did not dismount. Seeing the sentry, they waved their caps, shouting : " English ! English ! " The sentry, somewhat reassured, beckoned them, and aroused the company.

THERE followed a fine commotion ; the Gardes Civiques were instantly on their feet. While some officers who knew English were trying to talk with the dispatch riders, others gave orders : " Company fall in in two ranks ! Slope arms ! Present—arms ! "

In a few minutes all the nearby inhabitants were joining the Gardes Civiques in welcoming our Allies and offering them cigarettes, eggs, chocolate, fruit, beer, and so on.

Never shall I forget that moment when we first knew for certain that the British troops were drawing near and were going to fight the invader for our soil.

OUR two eyes were hopelessly insufficient to admire the martial glamour and magnificent equipment of our Allies. The leather rifle buckets, the ropes and pickets for tethering the horses, and, above all, the bags of corn rations, were subject to high praise.

The horsemen, still in the saddle, seemed in a tremendous hurry. Having asked the way to Obourg, they rode off again, amid vociferous cries of " Vivent les Anglais ! " " Vive L'Angleterre ! " raising their hands to acknowledge the spontaneous welcome which had been accorded them, and shouting " Hurrah!" in honour of Belgium.

As a precaution, an officer of the Garde Civique escorted them on his bicycle to Obourg, as much to show them the way as to ensure safe convoy.

After twenty-four years I cannot recall whether these horsemen belonged to the 9th Lancers (2nd Brigade) or to the 5th Lancers (3rd Brigade), but I can swear to it that they belonged to one or other of these units.

I have dwelt upon this event which I witnessed because it gave us inestimable encouragement at the very moment when we needed it most. Two days later I also witnessed the gallantry of the British infantry (8th Brigade, General B. J. C. D. Doran), which then consisted of the 4th Middlesex, 2nd Royal Irish Regiment, 1st Gordon Highlanders, and 2nd Royal Scots. For a whole day, on August 23, they resisted, almost alone, the brunt of the attack by the 9th German Corps in the Mons Salient and on the heights of Panisel and Bois-la-Haut. I pay equal tribute to the King's 15th Hussars, who fought in the same part of the line in the capacity of divisional cavalry, and to the 6th, 23rd and 49th Batteries of the 40th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery.

Let me add my most cordial greetings to those " Old Contemptibles " who fought in the ranks of either of these units. I assure them that the civilians of the district where they fought for the first time in the Great War have never forgotten, nor will they ever forget, the sacrifice they made.

INVADERS WHO FIRST FOUGHT AT MONS

As the German army invaded Belgium and France, war seemed to the troops something like a picnic until they met the enemy. This photograph shows German infantry in a farmyard with arms and equipment piled, enjoying a mid-day rest during the march " Nach Paris." A very few days later the Battle of Mons was to prove to them that the British Army, small though it might be, was by no means contemptible.



★ 11 August 22, 1914

I FIRED the FIRST SHOT!

An Historic Episode Related for the First Time

by Sergeant E. Thomas, M.M.

NOT until the Editor himself had visited the War Museum at Mons had he any idea who was the British soldier that fired the first shot in the Great War. But there he found documentary evidence which eventually enabled him to discover on duty at a Brighton theatre the fine military figure of Sergeant Thomas. His claim to have fired that fateful shot is now accepted, and it is a great editorial satisfaction to have secured from Sergeant Thomas himself the first account of this historic deed

IT is rather odd that twenty-four years afterwards I should be asked to tell about how I fired the first shot for the British Army in the Great War. Of course, when I did that I hadn't the slightest idea in the world I was doing anything of the kind, but it is officially proved, to the satisfaction of those in a position to judge, that I did have the distinction of firing the first of untold billions of shots that were discharged in the succeeding four years of terror and distress throughout the battlefields of the world.

Only lately, however, has there been any sort of interest shown in the fact, and at the time of writing, under the lead of my old regiment, the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, a memorial will be erected at the spot where on this historic occasion I pulled the trigger of my rifle.

The strange thing about the episode was, as far as I can remember—and it seems as clear to me as if it took place last week—that I had not the slightest feeling of being in battle, not the remotest idea that I was taking a very active part as far as rifle fire was concerned in what was to be the greatest war of all time.

It seemed to me like an ordinary action taking place in peace time manoeuvres, until the bullets started whizzing round me, and my shot certainly brought down an enemy who was no "dummy."

MY regiment left Tidworth for Southampton, embarking at noon on August 15, 1914, on H.M.T. Winnifrian and disembarked at Boulogne the following day. After a few days camp Haupont was reached by train on the 19th. We pushed forward, with no sign of the enemy. C Squadron, to which I belonged, was then detached from the regiment and sent forward on reconnaissance. The squadron moved forward to St. Denis, where we stayed the night, sending out patrols.

I need not say anything more of the Cavalry advance to Mons, as that had nothing to do with the critical moment I am going to describe, but it so happened that on the morning of August 22, 1914, when the countryside was flooded with the loveliest sunshine, its level rays making the haystacks in the spreading fields alongside the Mons-Charleroi road stand out boldly with their long black shadows to the west, that I, being a member of C Squadron, 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, was waiting on the south-east of the road near to and almost within the shadow of the Château de Ghislain, under cover, when one of our scouts reported "enemy coming down main road."

MAJOR BRIDGES, D.S.O., now Lieut.-General Sir Tom Bridges, gave the order, "4th Troop, dismounted ready for action; 1st Troop, behind, draw swords ready to go!" I can recall no tremendous sense of battle or ferocity of encounter even at that moment, or anything that seemed more exciting than one of peace-time manoeuvres.

I saw a troop of Uhlans coming leisurely down the road, the officer in front smoking a cigar. We were anxiously watching their movements when, quicker than I can write here, they halted, as if they smelt a rat. They had seen us! They turned quickly back. Captain Hornby got permission to follow on with the sabre troop, and down the road they galloped.

My troop was ordered to follow on in support, and we galloped on through the little village of Casteau. Then it was we could see the 1st Troop using their swords and scattering the Uhlans left and right. We caught them up.

Captain Hornby gave the order, "4th Troop, dismounted action!" We found cover for our horses by the side of the château wall. Bullets were flying past us and all round us, and possibly because I was rather noted for my quick movements and athletic ability in those days I was first in action. I could see a German cavalry officer some four hundred yards away standing mounted in full view of me, gesticulating to the left and to the right as he disposed of his dismounted men and ordered them to take up their firing positions to engage us. Immediately I saw him I took aim, pulled the trigger and automatically, almost as it seemed instantaneously, he fell to the ground, obviously wounded, but whether he was killed or not is a matter that I do not think was ever cleared up or ever became capable of proof.

That was the first shot that was fired by a rifle in the British Army, and I cannot repeat too often that at the time it seemed to me more like rifle practice on the plains of Salisbury.

IN one respect, however, and within a second or two, it was mighty different. From every direction, as it seemed, the air above us was thick with rifle and machine-gun bullets, the whistling noise



SERGEANT THOMAS

The man who fired the first shot is here seen with his wife and children during one of his periods of war-time leave. He had by this time been promoted sergeant, and the photograph of a happy family is a memento of war-time such as is treasured in many homes.



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NOT FORGOTTEN!

In the above photograph, ex-Sergeant Thomas is seen today in the uniform in which he pursues his peace-time vocation. He is wearing his war medals, the Military Medal being on the left of the row, while on the right is the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. In the photograph. right, he is seen "off duty."

of them and the little flurries of hay which they sent up like smoke as they hit upon the stacks that were all around and which were offering cover to the combatants—this was something rather different from our days of "make-believe."

STILL, it was really astonishing how few were injured in this first affair of the Cavalry. None of our men was hit by the enemy fire, which just shows you what a lot of bullets it takes to kill a man. This now historic moment over, and the job that we had been appointed to do discharged, our C Squadron patrol under Captain Hornby safely withdrew, with five prisoners captured in the sabre charge, to our position at the little village of Casteau. off the main road of Soignies.

I was promoted sergeant on the field at Messines on November 5, 1915, and continued my duties with my regiment till 1916, when I transferred to the Machine Gun Corps for the remaining period of the war. I had the good luck to come unscathed through the four long years of war. I was awarded the Military Medal for bravery in the field. I am also proud to say I was mentioned in Sir John French's dispatch for distinguished service in the field dated May 31, 1915.

On the disbandment of the Machine Gun Corps I returned to my old regiment, and served until my time expired in 1923. My happiest years have been passed in the service, and yet I must not say that, because I have been happy enough in my retirement, and glad to have had the good fortune to serve my country and to go through all sorts of dangerous situations



throughout the four long years of war, with nothing more serious than an attack of P.U.O., whatever the medical term for that is. However, the attack earned for me a few weeks' rest in Manchester General Hospital.

I WAS born in the Army. My father was serving in the Durham Light Infantry. I myself joined the Army at Kirkee, India, in the Royal Horse Artillery, being fourteen years of age, and transferred to the Cavalry when I was sixteen. When the Great War broke out I was already an old soldier, for, despite the fact that I was then only twenty-nine years of age, I had already seen fifteen years' service.

Another thing possibly worth mentioning is the fact that this first shot was fired not by an ordinary trooper but by a bandsman, as my actual position was that of a drummer. I find lots of people think that the bandsmen are not soldiers in the ordinary sense, but they are quite wrong, for every bandsman has got to do his military duties in addition to his musical ones, and the moment war comes he has to turn from his musical instrument to his weapon of battle.

It was a big change for me and my pals of the band of the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, who were playing at Southampton on August 4, 1914, when we had suddenly to return to headquarters and prepare for the stern business of war.



Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright, A.P., Ltd.

A SHOT RANG OUT—THE FIRST MAN FELL

On August 22, 1914, at this spot on the main Brussels-Mons road, four and a half miles north-east of Mons, there was the crack of a rifle, the prelude to a four-years' hail of death-dealing bullets and shells. The arrow on the right of the photograph marks the spot from which Trooper Thomas (then a drummer) fired the first shot of a British soldier in the Great War. A monument is to mark the spot.

HOW I LIVED through the FIRST HOURS at MONS

by Major A. Corbett Smith (late R.F.A.)

MAJOR CORBETT SMITH, soldier, publicist, and famous writer on many varied subjects, was an officer of the Royal Field Artillery during the battle of Mons. His impressions of that memorable day in the little town of Mons, from its first beginning to its melancholy close, form the subject of this vivid chapter. Major Corbett Smith was mentioned in dispatches for his valuable services

THE dawn of Sunday the 23rd broke dim and misty, giving promise of heat. From the late afternoon of the previous day squadrons and reconnaissance patrols from Chetwode's Cavalry Brigade had been pushing well forward on the flanks and front of the British line.

It was pretty though delicate work this feeling forward to get into touch with enemy outposts and patrols. Nor was there a troop which did not have some story to tell that evening of a tussle with enemy cavalry.

But as our cavalry pushed farther and farther northwards they found themselves confronting ever-increasing numbers and retirement became necessary.

Thus were the first shots fired.

The morning wore on. The countryside was not unlike one of our own mining districts, the little villages and low-roofed houses giving that curious smoky, grimy effect of mean suburbs of a large industrial town. Here and there great heaps of slag or disused pits and quarries ; gaunt iron stems carrying great wheels and heavy machinery.



COOL HEADS UNDER HOT FIRE

On August 24 the 9th Infantry Brigade, commanded by Brigadier-General F. C. Shaw and forming part of the Second Corps, fell back on the village of Frameries. The photograph shows General Shaw and his staff holding a council of war in the main street of Frameries while the Germans were actually firing down it from the other side of the barrier.



AS A GUNNER AT MONS

First commissioned in the R.F.A. in 1902, Major Corbett Smith was already a successful author when he rejoined the Army in 1914.

The soldiers were billeted all through the houses or in odd barns and yards. Looking over the garden gate of one little house I saw the company cooks of one regiment getting the Sunday dinner ready, peeling the potatoes, swinging the pots on to the camp fires.

From a barn hard by came the sound of singing. A padre had looked in as the rollicking chorus of " Who's your lady friend ? " swung out into the roadway, and with gentle interruption he improvised a short service, suggesting " Rock of Ages " as a substitute for the music-hall ditty.

Down the road a couple of sergeants of the West Ridings leant idly over a gate smoking and watching the folk going off to Mass.

INTO this peaceful scene a motor dispatch rider hurled himself, causing astonishment to a group of West Kents.

" Where's the officer ? Get moving ; you're wanted up there ! " and he jerked a thumb over his shoulder.

The men rushed for their kit and rifles. Away to the west there was the crack of an 18-pounder. Down the street the cyclist panted. A subaltern burst in on the Sunday dinner of the Bedfords.

" Fall in outside at once ! "

All down the line there sprang the crack of rifles. Beyond the canal outposts of the Lincolns, Royal Scots and others were coming in at the double. A curtain of shell fire was lowered behind them as the British batteries came into action. A curtain fire rolled down before them as the German guns took the range. It was now close upon one o'clock, and enemy shells had begun to creep nearer and nearer in from the suburbs upon Mons itself.

North of the town, where our lines necessarily bulged out, making a salient, the fighting became desperate.



TO BE HELD TO THE LAST MAN

When the British retreat from Mons began on Sunday, August 23, 1914, recourse was had to every available means of holding up the German army while the British Expeditionary Force fell back. In village streets rough barricades such as this one at Cuesmes were erected. A similar makeshift defence is seen in the distance in the photograph in page 43. From behind these barricades the British troops kept up such rapid rifle fire that the Germans thought machine-guns were being used against them.

Here three regiments especially (the Middlesex, Royal Irish, and Royal Fusiliers) lost very heavily as they sturdily contested every yard of ground. This point had, from the first, been recognized as the weakest in our lines.

Barely an hour since the first shots were fired, and now by one o'clock practically every gun and every rifle of the British Force was blazing away as though the powers of hell were let loose.

As yet it would seem that the ammunition was being merely wasted for the sake of making a noise. There was no enemy in sight save in the air the circling aeroplanes, and away on the flanks dimly seen clouds of horsemen. A modern battlefield with its curious *emptiness* has so often been described that here one need only record the fact in passing. There was nothing to be seen. The men were firing, in the first flush of excitement, at corners of possible concealment—the line of a hedge, the edge of a wood, the very occasional flash of a field-gun.

On the left, in the Second Corps, the British fire slackened somewhat as the men pulled themselves together. No one had the foggiest notion of what was really happening. It was the officers' business of the moment to steady the ranks and keep them under cover.

But away on the right out towards Binche, where the Guards were, the storm had burst out in fullest fury. No slackening there. The German gun-fire was incessant and amazingly accurate. The effect of shells from their heavier guns, later so familiar, was at that time overwhelming.

Still, the British guns out towards Binche went gallantly pounding on, hopelessly outmatched though they were.

The fighting on the right, where General Lomax had the 1st Division, did not slacken for a moment, but steadily became more intense. Now, for the first time, the enemy was really seen. And as his infantry began an advance the German shell-fire redoubled in intensity. Every house where British could be concealed, every possible observation post, every foot of trench, every hill-crest and 400 yards behind it was swept and devastated by the tornado.

What communication between units was possible in such a storm? Now battalions and batteries found themselves cut off from their neighbours, each fighting and carrying on by itself.

Chetwode's Cavalry Brigade was caught in the thick of it. The Guards held on almost by their teeth.

The cavalry had to go; and the Munsters and Black Watch lost horribly as they covered the retirement. No finer fighting regiments in the world than these on the right, but nothing human could stay there and live. The little town of Binche was abandoned—the first enemy success.

It must have been about 2.30 in the afternoon that this happened. But it was before the fall of Binche that the German infantry attacks began all along the line.

One end of the Yorks L.I. trench ended in a little stone-walled pigsty. At least it was a pigsty about church time that morning, but a German gunner thought it would look better without any roof or walls.

There was still a fragment three feet high on the weather side, and the Yorks C.O. found it a convenient shelter.

For some minutes he had been intently watching through his glasses the corner of a wood about 500 yards in front. He handed the binoculars to the sergeant.

"What do you make of it? That corner over the little shed."



DRAB SCENE OF GREAT EVENTS

Four and a half miles east of Mons on the road to Charleroi is the village of Villers-St Ghislain. In the teacher's house and school, the second building from the right in the photograph, Sir Edmund Allenby, who was in command of the Cavalry Division of the British Expeditionary Force, had his headquarters from August 22 until the retreat.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

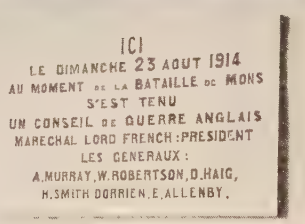


HITHERTO UNPICTURED SCENE OF A FATEFUL MEETING

On Sunday, August 23, 1914, at 5 a.m., in the room shown above, Sir John French and his generals came to one of the most momentous decisions ever taken in the long history of the British Army. They occupied the chairs placed around the dining table exactly as they are placed in the photograph.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.







THE War Council took place in the Château de la Roche at Sars-la-Bruyère, seen left, south west of Mons, while six miles away the British Expeditionary Force was making its heroic stand against the enemy. The Council resulted in the decision to retire and the planning of the first few moves in the retreat, of which Sir Nevil Macready has said that it "will live as one of the greatest feats of arms in the history, not only of this country, but of the world."

Above is the marble plaque in the hall of the château, now unoccupied, which commemorates this event and records the names of the generals present. To the left of the plaque is a scar made by a German soldier who thrust his bayonet through the wall and wrote above it "Maubeuge Gefallen" (Maubeuge has fallen). The owner of the château caused it to be covered with glass and added the inscription "Cri et geste de Boche, 8 Sept., 1914" ("Cry and gesture of the Boche").



TAKEN IN THE FIRST ONWARD RUSH TO MONS

The sleepy little Belgian town of Binche, seen here as it is today, was on the extreme right of the British Army as it stood at the Battle of Mons. The Guards were holding the line in that neighbourhood, and the first sign of the impending retreat of the British Army was when they had to fall back from Binche.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

The sergeant had a look. He returned the glasses and slowly nodded.

" It might be a brigade, sir, from the number of them."

" Yes," said the C.O., " I thought it was about time. Get word along that there is to be no firing till the order's given."

" Very good, sir ! " And the sergeant scrambled to his feet, saluted, ducked hastily as a shell seemed to whistle past unnecessarily close, and dived into the rabbit-burrow in which his men were squatting.

THE C.O. of a British battery, in position some distance to the rear, had evidently also spotted that particular target, for puffs of bursting shrapnel had begun to appear over the wood and round the edges.

Now there was a distinct movement of troops emerging from behind the wood. It was a movement only which could be seen, for the men themselves could scarcely be distinguished against the grey-green countryside.

At the very same moment it seemed as though all the guns in the world had been turned on to those few miles of British front and to the batteries behind. The Yorkshire C.O. held his fire until the last moment—but when he gave the order for rapid fire (sixteen shots a minute per man) it was impossible to miss. You can't help hitting the side of a house, and that was what the target looked like. It was just slaughter. The oncoming ranks simply melted away.

The attack still came on. Though hundreds, thousands of the grey coats were mown down, as many more crowded forward to refill the ranks.

Nearer still, and with a hoarse yell, the Yorkshires, Dorsets, Cornwalls and others were out of the trenches, officers ahead of them, with bayonets fixed and heading straight at the enemy. A murderous machine-gun fire met them, but it did not stop them, and in a minute they were thrusting and bashing with rifles, fists, stones, in amongst the enemy ranks.

Again the German gunners dropped their range and poured their shells indiscriminately into friend and foe. It was too much for the attacking regiments and they broke up hopelessly, turned and began to struggle back. It was impossible to attempt any rally of our men. They went on until they were overwhelmed by sheer numbers, or they straggled to the lines as best they could in knots of twos and threes, or wandered aimlessly off to the flanks and got lost.

SUCH was one single attack. But no sooner was it broken than fresh regiments would march out to begin it all over again. And here was no Pass of Thermopylae where a handful of men could withstand for indefinite time an army. What could the British hope to do against such overwhelming numbers ?

The cavalry, the only reserves, were working, surely, as no cavalry has ever worked before. Squadrons were everywhere at once. Wherever a gap was threatened they were there in support. And wherever they went there also went the Horse Gunners, working hand and glove with them. Charge and counter-charge upon the flanks of the attacking infantry, dismounting to cover with their fire a British infantry rally, fierce hand-to-hand encounters with enemy squadrons. Wherever they were wanted, each man and horse was doing the work of ten.

But this could not last for long. Now it was becoming only too evident that far from there being a reasonable superiority against us, the British were everywhere along the line hopelessly outnumbered in every arm.

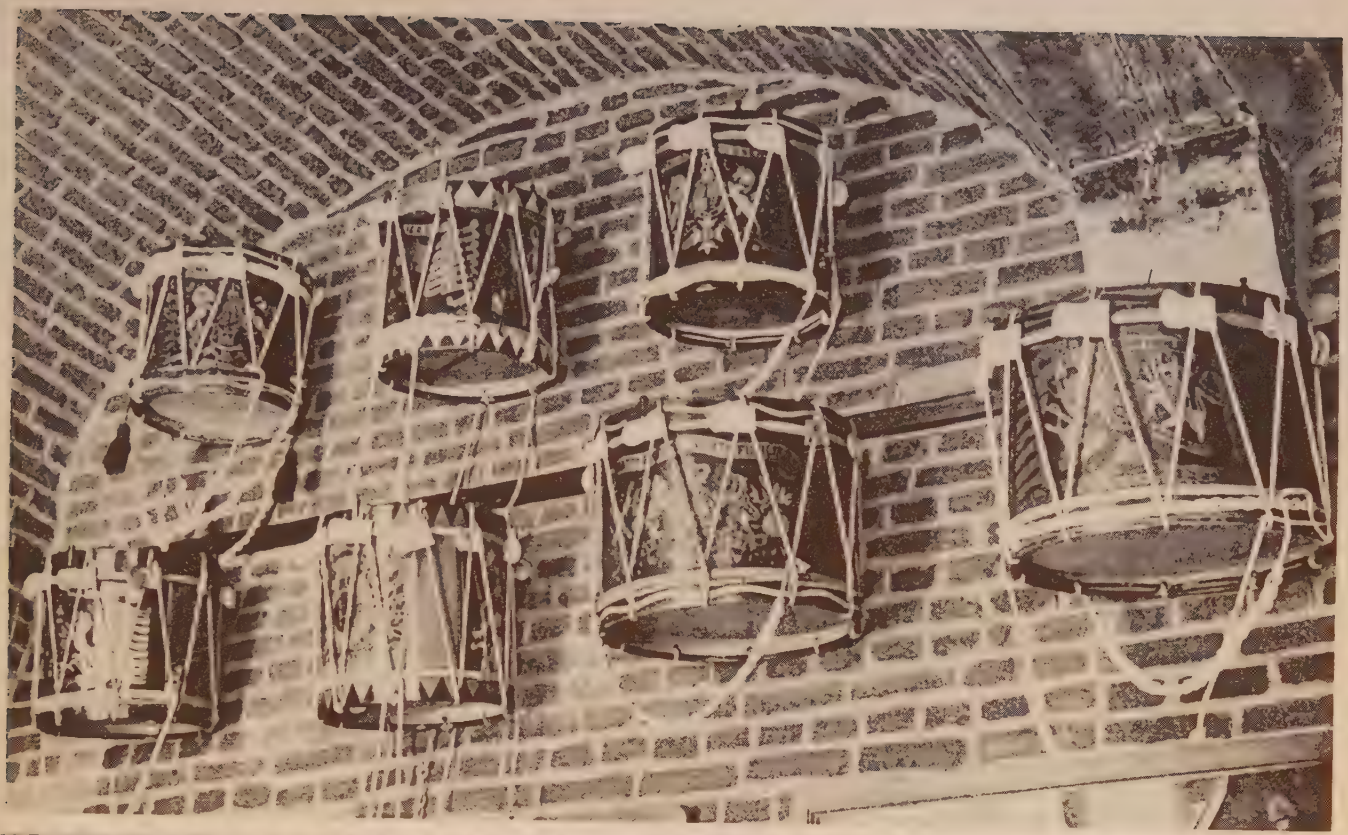
At 6.0 p.m. the enemy had concentrated their fire upon the town of Mons and it became untenable.

Only six hours, six little hours since the Belgian townsfolk had come peacefully home from Mass to their Sunday *déjeuner*, proud and hopeful in the presence of their British allies. And now their houses, their town, a heap of smoking ruins.

In those short hours how many women had seen their children crushed by falling walls or blown to atoms by bursting shells ? How many children were left helpless and alone in the world, with no mother or father to take them by the hand and guide them from the hell of destruction ?

About 2 a.m. (the 24th) orders to begin retiring were issued from G.H.Q. Some four hours before a few of the units—those north of the canal—had begun to fall back ; and so the beginning of the move was made. As the last of these crossed the bridges the detonator fuses were fired and the bridges blown up.

For the rest, the men crouched ever in their places, bayonets fixed, rifles always ready—waiting, waiting.





HOW MONS COMMEMORATES BRITAIN'S PART IN HER WAR FORTUNES

In the Mons Museum are many relics of the battle of Mons, of the German occupation, and of the town's final deliverance on November 11, 1918. Above are some of the twenty-five British drums in the Museum, either picked up on the battlefields or presented by regiments. The lower photograph shows figures of British soldiers of 1914 and 1918 in the Museum. That left is in the uniform of a private of a Fusilier regiment. Centre is an officer of the Royal Canadian Regiment, presented by the regiment to commemorate the fact that Lieutenant W. M. King, from Halifax, Nova Scotia, was the first Allied officer to enter the town, at 3 a.m., on November 11, 1918. Right is a piper of the 1st Gordon Highlanders, presented by the regiment. The lack of British likeness in the faces is due, no doubt, to the type of wax models available at Mons.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



THE FINE MEN OF OUR OLD ARMY WHO FOUGHT THE FLOWER OF GERMANY'S MIGHTY LEGIONS

The men who formed the original British Expeditionary Force were seasoned soldiers, for though only a few of them had seen active service in the South African War, they had all undergone that intensive training which made possible the retreat from Mons without disaster. In this photograph we see more of the men of the B.E.F. who are shown in pages 24 and 25 as a long column, halted in a French village during the advance. Several units are represented in the group, and arms have been piled and haversacks thrown off until the order to go forward is given.

Photo, Imperial War Museum





WAITING AND WATCHING BEFORE A FIERCE ONSLAUGHT

These vivid and unpublished photographs record the last stage of the northward march of Britain's "contemptible little army" when Mons and Jemappes were reached. Above, at Jemappes on August 22, 1914, men of the B.E.F. are resting while villagers welcome their country's allies. It was already certain that the Germans were not far distant, and cavalry patrols were out seeking news of them. Below, two scouts are trying to gain information from civilians, and though they have no language in common a fellow-feeling against the foe makes communication easy.

Mons Museum



THEY HAD FOUGHT AT MONS—IN THE FIGHTING RETREAT THEY TURNED AND FOUGHT AGAIN

It is difficult to believe that the men in this rare photograph are retreating after the terrible experiences of the battle of Mons, but they are British cavalrymen (of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade) halted beside a French farmyard only a few hours after the battle. They are carrying the full equipment of cavalry on field service, including rations for themselves and fodder for their horses. Nosebags are seen hanging from the saddles of the men, and below them can be seen the picketing peg. After Mons they were in action at Elouges, and with the 3rd Cavalry Brigade guarded the right flank of Smith Dorrien's Corps at Le Cateau.

I WALKED WITH FEAR

by Lt.-Col. Arthur Osburn, D.S.O., R.A.M.C.

LT.-COL. OSBURN was at Mons as medical officer of a famous cavalry regiment, the 4th Dragoon Guards, the first British regiment to fire a shot in the war (see the account in pages 41—42). His wonderfully graphic picture of some of the events of that fateful day and the subsequent cavalry action at Elouges will be followed in later pages by further instalments of his graphic narrative



A DOCTOR AT MONS

After serving as a private in the Yeomanry during the South African War, Colonel Osburn qualified as a doctor in 1902 and was commissioned in the R.A.M.C. in 1903. He was promoted major in 1915 and awarded the D.S.O. in 1916.

SUNDAY, the twenty-third of August, 1914. We had arrived at Thulin, on the bank of the canal that stretches from Mons to Condé. We had had no sleep worth talking about for some days, and had been already, the first unit in the British Army, in contact with the enemy. On the Saturday, Hornby with a half squadron had got as far as Soignies, where from the church tower the field of Waterloo was just visible. They had pursued and charged some German cavalry : Bavarian ploughboys in German uniforms—that was all they really were. These boys carried long metal lances, like lengths of gas-piping, they could not manage. Some of these lads had been killed and three or four wounded and captured. Fair, resolute, genial and a keen soldier, Hornby with his troop, magnificently mounted—as, indeed, we all were—yelling at full charge, their long, straight swords a glittering row of steely points, would have put fear into far more hardened soldiers.

* * * *

After forty-eight hours of almost continuous movement we had finished up with a long night ride through the wretched slums of Frameries, Wasmes, and Paturages. That ride had been a nightmare ; a thin drizzle had turned the coal-dust that lay everywhere into a greasy slime. Our horses, half-asleep like ourselves, had staggered on, stumbling over the uneven cobbles and cinder heaps, slipping and falling on the endless network of tram and trolley lines. So on that Sunday we were all drowsy and slack, yet the tension in the air was unmistakable. Early in the afternoon there had fallen an ominous silence. Everyone and everything, even the great line of elm trees opposite our billet, seemed to be attentive, as if waiting for something to happen.

A sense of impending disaster pervaded the silent village. We knew that the Germans were not far away. Twenty minutes afterwards we were engaged in the battle of Mons ; five hours later we had begun the long Retreat . . .

I shall not easily forget the overture of that extraordinary battle. At three-thirty on that sultry Sunday afternoon there arose, apparently about eight hundred yards in front of us, a crackling sound exactly like the noise of an October bonfire into which a cartload of dry holly boughs has been suddenly thrown—a fierce, steady crackle that grew ominously louder and angrier and nearer, moment by moment. I had heard nothing like *that* in the Boer War !

My heart sank. There surged over me the first and worst moments of dismay—of fear—in the war. Afterwards I was often partly indifferent to danger from sheer exhaustion, nerve strain and fatigue, yet not seldom—like, I think, most others—I walked with Fear, or at least apprehension, a tall, grey figure stalking by my side or never very far away. The deep thunder of our own or enemy artillery fire could be stimulating, but the angry crackle of massed rifles I shall always loathe.

FIRST HOT ENGAGEMENT

THE regiment mounted, and we moved off a few hundred yards to the left and dismounted again. A German and an English plane, firing viciously at one another, circled overhead . . .

The infantry in the line ahead of us were evidently in for a hot time. We, as cavalry, were merely standing-to for eventualities. Presently wounded from the infantry regiments just in front of us began to limp and stagger down the road on our right. I left the regiment and walked over to some cart-sheds just across this road, which I had already marked down as my prospective "dressing station." My groom and servant, and my corporal led our horses over, and I knelt down in the shed to dress the first of the British troops who had been wounded. As I did so the first bursts of German shrapnel were coming over with a venomous buzz like swarms of angry hornets. Soon I was up to my eyes in work, the knees of my riding-breeches soaked with the blood that was running all over the place from those who were badly wounded.

AMID THE CARNAGE

MORE and more, in twos and threes, sixes and sevens, then in streams, the wounded poured in, some walking, some carried pick-a-back or in hand-seats, and a few on stretchers. Manchesters and D.C.L.I.'s, K.O.S.B.'s and several other regiments. But where were their doctors ? There seemed to be not a sign of one ! I did not realize, then, the almost hopeless task that the infantry doctors were engaged in. My orderly and myself made desperate attempts to cope with the streams of wounded men. The whole of the cart-sheds were now full of wounded that lay or sat about in the mud and sodden straw. Every post was being clung to by those able to stand ; some slipped down and fainted. There were now streams of men, presumably wounded, passing right and left across the fields : I knew not to where. It never occurred to me that anyone was retreating. More shrapnel was coming over, and our own Horse Artillery was replying.

We must have been there for hours, but it seemed only a few minutes before we were lighting candles and lanterns to see what we were doing. So numerous now were the wounded that I could only find time to look at the worst, and then do little more than tighten an amateur tourniquet or plug a gaping wound in the chest wall with gauze, and give morphia in heroic doses to those who appeared to be in the most pain. . .

I got up and went out. A blaze of burning hayricks and a bright glow from a hundred thousand rifles in rapid



KNOWN TO ALL SERVING SOLDIERS: HUMOURS OF TRANSPORT IN CATTLE TRUCKS

An immense strain was put on the resources of the French railways in transportation requirements in the early days of the war. Every bit of rolling stock, no matter how old and dilapidated, was brought into service and goods wagons were used when passenger coaches ran short. The inscription seen on the left of most of the trucks, "8 horses, 40 men"—soon to become a commonplace of war travel in France—appealed to the Tommies as a humorous comparison of the respective worth of man and beast, and in this case one of them has added a little bit of humour of his own, but it had a double meaning, for these men were indeed about to strike, and strike hard, against the enemy.



fire lit up the darkening northern sky just beyond some trees. Down the centre of the road on the other side of which I had left my regiment were coming streams of wounded—hopping, crawling, walking or being carried—but the dry ditches on either side of the road just outside my "dressing-station" were full of whispering shadows.

"What's the matter with you all there?" I demanded.

There was no reply from the huddled forms in the darkness of the ditch. I was really too weary to be indignant, but I pretended to be.

"If you don't immediately rejoin your regiments in the firing line, I'll take every man's name and regiment and send him to his adjutant. You know what that means—court martial for desertion in the face of the enemy!"

There was a silence, and then a few, only a few, of the huddled forms sullenly emerged with their rifles and walked with slow, depressed step; back towards that pink glow and that "holly-bush" crackling beyond the trees.

* * * *

GETTING suddenly alarmed at all the possibilities, I hurriedly collected my gear, and we mounted, leaving, alas! many wounded, some partly and others quite unattended. I left them in charge of a senior non-commissioned officer of infantry who was only slightly wounded. I reminded him of the most simple forms of tourniquets, and giving him an armful of dressings, advised him when the carts came back to move all the rest of the wounded to Thulin, the village about half a mile back on the road behind us. This I think he did, for carts with wounded began arriving while I was attending to those already in the town hall there. This was not the only time in which it was quite impossible to fulfil my duty to my unit and to the wounded of other units.



LULL BEFORE THE STORM

The first units of the British Expeditionary Force arrived at Mons on August 21, and for two days the little town was a drowsy haven of peace under the summer sun In the top photograph some British Tommies are taking a siesta on the road beside the Mons-Condé canal, where they were soon to fight. A French interpreter stands on the grass verge, and on the left is the bascule of one of the canal bridges typical of this part of Belgium. In the lower photograph, men off duty are fraternizing with the people of Mons who, with them, were soon to face the terrors of war.

Mons Museum

We entered the little town of Thulin in darkness and silence; indeed, I was rather surprised how silent everything had suddenly become. There was but one building that had any light in it. As we passed it I was besieged by a party of Belgian priests and nuns. "M'sieur is a doctor? Please come in at once—in here! There are many English wounded! There are no doctors! We do not know what to do!"

I dismounted and entered what was evidently the *Mairie* or town hall. The steps were thronged with a jostling crowd of wounded. Many excited Belgian peasants and Sisters of Mercy were carrying in mattresses, straw, jugs of water and old sheets for bandages.

The scene inside was one with which I was soon to be only too familiar. It was packed with wounded, lying down, crouching or standing; the stairs were blocked with sitting cases, the passages with loaded stretchers. There were several whose hastily applied tourniquets had evidently slipped, lying in a dead faint from loss of blood.

EVERYWHERE lights and confusion and a babel of tongues — Cockney "French," Flemish, and broken English. I spoke but little French, and getting hold of the most responsible priests and the older Catholic sisters, I urged them to keep the badly wounded cases on the ground floor, and send all the slightly wounded cases up to the rooms on the upper floors of the building; they had started doing the very reverse!

"But why, m'sieur?"

"Because in case of fire you will never get the stretcher cases down again in time, if you carry them up those narrow stairs."

"Fire! But why should there be a fire? The bad cases will be more comfortable upstairs. Besides there are far too many slight cases to put up in the small rooms above. And some of the upper rooms are locked—half full of the town's records."

"Never mind," I said. "Burst the doors open. Let all the wounded who can walk go up and leave the stairs and passages free. They can sit down on the floor in the upstairs rooms."

We began gradually to get the place in some sort of order. The palliasses and mattresses which were being brought in we arranged in rows. Straw had been put down where there were no mattresses, much too much straw—the harvest was just beginning.

The sisters were giving the men cigarettes. I tried to dissuade them. "Don't encourage them to smoke here, or you will soon have all this straw on fire."

"Soldiers! Poor English soldiers! Not smoke! After such a brave battle!" They gazed at me, astonished. I might as well have ordered them to stop the men breathing.

Soon I was terribly busy with the worst cases. Only two can I remember

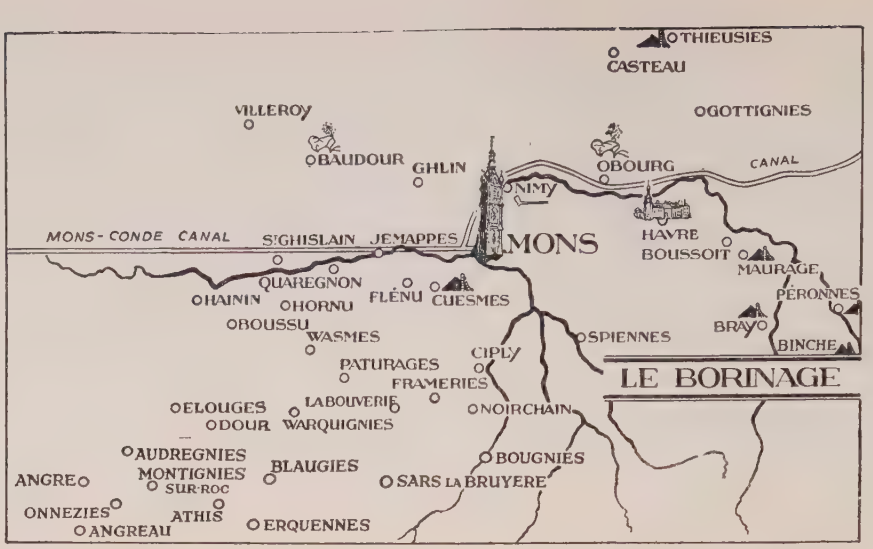
in all that confusion. One badly wounded in the head, yet conscious enough to point to the man lying next to him.

"Sir, that man alongside blew off his own right hand recharging a fuse to blow up a bridge across that canal which the Germans had captured. He went back alone of his own accord to do it himself—the first charge wouldn't go off. If he hadn't stopped the Germans, they would have enfiladed our whole line."

The men were, I think, both Royal Engineers. I dressed the stump of the hero of the bridge and hastily scribbled his name and number in my notebook.

"You won't be forgotten," I said; "you deserve a V.C. I'll see that the General hears about it."

I was in the midst of giving instructions as to each wounded man not injured in the stomach having at least a litre of milk a day, when an excited sister seized me by the arm.



This map shows in detail the district in which the battle of Mons was fought. Le Borinage is the mining country (see photos below). The fighting retreat is mapped in colour in pp. 70—71.

"M'sieur! Go at once! The Germans are here!"

"Here!"

"Yes, m'sieur, in the street outside! No! Not that way! By the side door—to the right! Quick! Quick!"

I dashed to the side door to find my groom and orderly looking pale and excited. They, too, had just seen the Germans; indeed had actually rubbed shoulders with them in the darkness outside. We all three flung ourselves on our horses and dashed away from the *Mairie*, not knowing in the least which direction to take.

A light rain had begun to fall and the cobble-stones were greasy. Shots behind added wings to our speed. Galloping madly in the darkness, slithering and skidding through those silent streets, we were nearly down half a dozen times.

Where was everybody? What had become of the British Army? Why had nobody told me? Where were we galloping to?

"*Où sont les Chasseurs anglais? Où sont les Dragons de la Garde?*" I shouted through the echoing streets, the excitement playing havoc with my scanty French. There was no answer to my ill-judged questions, only shots and the echoes of our clattering hoofs.

Suddenly we were fired at point-blank from in front; the flash showed a group of dismounted cavalry on the left of the road.

Someone shouted in French: "*Qui va là?*"

The voice had an unmistakable English accent.

"Who's that?" I shouted. "I'm 4th Dragoon Guards."

"Ninth Lancers," answered the voice. "Where the hell have you come from?"

We had bumped into the rear troop of the rearguard of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade. Geoffrey A'Court, I think it was, and his men were guarding the railway crossing. There was a hurried explanation, and the sliding metal gates rolled back for us to cross the lines.





THE EDITOR SURVEYS THE SCENE OF AN HISTORIC ENCOUNTER

Above is the high ground between Péronnes and Bray, seen from the latter village, while on the right the same area is viewed from Péronnes. The same slag-heap is seen in both photographs, towering above the battlefield, over which the Editor looks out. The neighbourhood of Bray is memorable as the scene of the first encounter of the Scots Greys with the enemy, in which they showed the valour traditional in the regiment. The battle of Mons is called by Belgians the battle of Mons and Le Borinage (the Black Country), for the area in which it was fought, shown in de ail in the map above, is largely a coalfield. The mining district is indicated by sketches of slag-heaps, and the beet-growing area, just north of it, by sketches of beet plants.

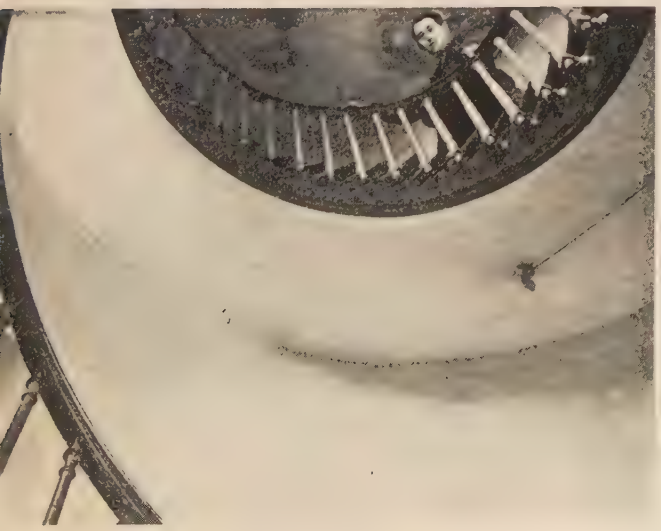
THULIN: SCENE OF TERROR AND TRAGEDY

The photographs in this page illustrate the incidents related in Colonel Osburn's thrilling story of the first day of the retreat, when the British were driven out of Thulin, a small town about half-way between Mons and Condé. The town remained in German hands until the end of the war, and was therefore but little damaged.





Above is the Mairie or Town Hall, which Colonel Osburn turned into a temporary hospital, helped by Belgian priests and nuns. Streams of wounded poured in, some serious cases and some "walking wounded." While he was dealing with an overwhelming task the word came, "The Germans are here," and he had to leave it or be captured. He made his escape through the door in the right of the white wall (left-hand photo), leading into what is now a school playground.





The danger of fire was ever present in Colonel Osburn's mind and, with that fear in view, he sent only those who could walk to the upper floor of the building. Above is the circular staircase of the Town Hall which in this tragic hour was "thronged with a jostling crowd of wounded." Right is the level crossing where "the sliding metal gates swung open" and Colonel Osburn rejoined the British Army.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

I found my regiment half a mile back in a soaking cornfield, whose every sheaf drenched one as one touched it. No lights were to be shown, and it was almost out of the question to lie down, for the ground was sodden. We had had only a very few light casualties in the regiment; Pat Fitzgerald, our machine-gun commander, had his cheek slit open with a bullet. I sewed up the wound, several inches long, by the screened light of a candle as he and I crouched behind a sheaf. The road past the field was crowded with Belgian peasants and their children hurrying away in the dark. . . . . .

For a moment or two I watched the refugees, trying to think what on earth could be happening. It was unbelievable that any part of the British Army should have begun to retire in the first few hours of Armageddon. Would not some of us be court-martialled? The Army and Navy had for years been looking forward in confidence to a sharp decisive scrap with Germany. In the naval ward-rooms I had visited and the military messes I had lived in, conversation constantly returned to that subject. We had all been cheerfully assured of victory; prepared to the last range-finder, ready to the last gaiter-button—and now!

UP IN FLAMES

PRESENTLY a bright light flared up behind us; some of the refugees turned, their white faces lit by the glare.

"What's that?" I asked.

"It must be the town hall, m'sieur. It is the only building of that size in Thulin."

So the expected had happened. I have always had a horror of fire, especially in hospitals; I thought of that crowded building with so many nearly helpless men and confused and frightened priests and sisters—of the suffocating blaze and smoke from damp straw, khaki clothing and mattresses. How ghastly! But with all those men smoking it needed no prophet to foresee what was almost a certainty.

And my V.C. hero—too weak from loss of blood from that jagged stump to walk! Poor devil! He had looked as white as a sheet—was he at that moment being burnt alive?

I fumbled for my notebook. At least this gallant soldier should have posthumous honour—his mother and his relations, his corps and his country should know of his self-sacrifice. My notebook was gone! I had had it in my hand when the sister warned me. That panic-stricken dash from the town hall, the mad ride over those greasy cobble-stones, accounted only too easily for the loss.

Should any Royal Engineer who fought near Thulin that night read these lines, possibly even now the man's name might be discovered.

Perhaps he has already been posthumously honoured, or best of all possibly he escaped from that blazing building and was cared for by the enemy. As I learnt afterwards, the Germans—all things considered—devoted great care and skill, sometimes even were very kind to our wounded.

CONFUSED FIGHTING

GRADUALLY our men were being pressed back to the outskirts of Elouges [August 24] . . . It is hard to describe clearly what happened . . . or just when and where the trouble began; but as it concerns one of the most famous incidents of the retreat from Mons it may be worth while to make some attempt, though I was but a puzzled spectator, not an actor. The difficulty in giving a clear account was increased by the confusing nature of the country. Within a radius of about three thousand yards of Elouges and of one another lay at least six little villages: Angre, Angreau, Audregnies, Montignies, Onnezies and Wiheries—similar in size, each situated in a little valley, their names having to English ears a similar sound. [See the sketch map given in page 54.] Outside each village, and as alike as two peas, were one or more little cemeteries surrounded with brick walls. In or near this area, strange to us on that eventful morning, dotted as it was with conical slag-heaps about sixty feet high, and intersected with many sunken roads, railways and trolley lines, no fewer than three brigades or twenty-seven squadrons of our cavalry were active between 8 a.m. and noon, in addition to several battalions of infantry and many artillery units. If my account of what I saw appears confused, this must be my only excuse. . . It must have been about 11 a.m. when the brigade turned about at the shrine and rode back through the two villages towards the small cemetery at Wiheries.

THE brigade halted twice. Artillery fire had begun on our right; this I supposed to be our guns on the hillside to the south and east of us. Then heavy firing began from the German line—that is, to the north and east, and also on our left. Some—not very much—shrapnel was coming over. I had the impression that an important move was about to take place, and as my position in an action should be alongside my own colonel, who was on ahead, I decided to overtake him. I saw him and a few of his staff turn up to the right and then halt. The remainder of the regiment—all three squadrons as I thought—turned to the left, towards the Germans. I missed my groom and stopped for a moment to look for him; then a squadron of the 9th who had got just in front of me turned about, and I had perforce—because of the narrowness of the lane—to turn about with them. They turned down to their right between two walls, and there they halted, facing the Germans. I turned about again, intending to rejoin the headquarters of my own regiment. Instead of overtaking them, I found myself with some of the 18th Hussars riding up a slope above some railway lines towards where our field and horse batteries were halted. The firing had become much heavier. Some of our cavalry were riding towards the railway lines between us and the Germans, making apparently for the tall brick building—a sugar factory.

A perfect hurricane of shelling began. Then the whole scene was blotted out in smoke and dust. Like most of the others, I had heard no orders, did not know a charge was taking place. I don't think anyone except those taking part in it did, and many of them told me afterwards they thought it was only a reconnaissance. The noise was now terrific. Shells were bursting higher up the hill; some seemed to be skimming just overhead. With two mounted signallers and a man of the 18th Hussars I rode in between two walls close to a cemetery, where we sheltered. The broad slope of the hill above and behind, to the south of us, was now one white cloud of bursting shell. Then some of the 9th and 18th came galloping past us excitedly. Everybody seemed to be shouting, though the din was so deafening we could not hear what they said; but with the signallers I followed some of them, only to find myself again in one of the villages we had passed through nearly an hour before.

STILL IN RETREAT

IT must then have been about 11.30 a.m. The Hussar—an officer's servant—had followed after us. He and I rode up to the hilltop crowned by the little shrine at the fork roads. The artillery fire all round was very heavy. I could see troops moving down below me—across our front—but whether English or German I could not be certain (probably the Cheshires or part of our 19th Brigade). Unaware that my regiment—and indeed the whole



THROUGH FLANDERS FIELDS THEY RODE TO A GREAT ADVENTURE

The flat plains of Flanders were the picture of peace as the British Army went north. The approach of their allies was first known to the French and Belgians when they caught sight of the cavalry scouts, such as these two Lancers, riding along a straight, flat road in August 1914. The Germans are as yet far distant, for civilians are standing by the roadside to watch the passing of the British cavalrymen.

Imperial War Museum

brigade—were dispersed and disorganized, temporarily non-existent, I started off again to find them.

Only by piecing together the conflicting accounts and experiences of survivors did I manage during the next week to get a hazy idea of the day's events. At 10 a.m. the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, sixteen or seventeen hundred officers and men, Dragoons, Lancers and Hussars, had been practically intact; yet before noon it was so broken and scattered as to be for the time being non-existent. By 7 o'clock that evening about two hundred men and a few officers had arrived in Wargnies-le-Petit, believing themselves to be the only survivors. Whole batteries of horse and field artillery had apparently been exterminated.

One account was that General de Lisle, hearing that the Fifth infantry division on our right was in difficulties and trying to extricate itself from the German attack, had placed his brigade at the disposal of the G.O.C. To delay the advance of the Germans on our retreating infantry and prevent the capture of our field batteries, our brigade was to make some sort of demonstration in force. This was to be preceded by a reconnaissance of the ground by two troops of the 18th Hussars or the 9th Lancers.

EITHER the orders were confused or confusing—or the general's commands were given direct to the troops and squadrons concerned, always a fatal mistake, instead of being passed as they should have been through the regimental commanders.

At all events the two troops sent out to reconnoitre had been followed by practically the whole brigade. The Germans, seeing a comparatively large mass of cavalry suddenly let loose and galloping towards them, got a bad attack of nerves—why, it is hard to understand, for the network of hedges, wire fences, allotments, trolley lines and other obstructions made it unlikely that our cavalry would ever reach either their infantry or guns. But nearly every German gun within range had at once been put on to the small area on which our cavalry were moving.

Presumably to counter this our field and horse artillery had also been compelled to open fire, thus disclosing prematurely and fatally their own position. They in turn had been hopelessly hammered by the German massed artillery. A first-class "battle" had in fact developed with the rapidity of a whirlwind from this muddled order. For the German infantry, imagining themselves to be really threatened also by this charge of British cavalry, had taken it seriously and checked their advance.

Every rifle and machine-gun on their side was now also blazing away

GERMAN HOSTS SWEPT THROUGH THIS VILLAGE STREET

The mighty rush of the German army through Belgium was so swift that the little towns and villages that lay in the way remain today much as they were in August 1914. Here is Elouges, which was the scene of the first contact between the British Expeditionary Force and the right wing of the German army in August 1914. It was on August 24 that troopers of the 2nd British Cavalry Brigade clattered over the cobblestones of the village street to meet the Germans.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.





at our desperate and rather objectless cavalrymen.

What all our men exactly did—indeed, what any of them did—when they debouched from behind those walls into a perfect hurricane of shell and machine-gun fire, and the clouds of dust and ashes disturbed from the slag-heaps, no one seems quite to know. Some eventually got over to the sugar factory, from which they were soon driven out again by furious machine-gun fire; hundreds crashed amongst the railway lines, horses tripped on the low signal-wires or pitched headlong—breaking their riders' necks—into ballast pits near the railway; some even reached the hedge and wooden palings bounding the allotments on the far side of the railway, fairly terrifying the Germans—as a German told me afterwards in Cologne—by their reckless and meaningless onrush; some few actually galloped under this terrific fire through a half-circle of two miles and survived.



SCENE OF A DISASTROUS CAVALRY ENCOUNTER

The lower of these two photographs shows the Sugar Factory through which Major Tom Bridges miraculously escaped during the terrible incident when, owing to misunderstood orders, two troops of cavalry were almost annihilated by German artillery and machine-gun fire. Only a few days before the men who were mown down had been amid such peaceful scenes as that shown above, where a cavalry scout, with rifle ready for action, looks over the plains of Flanders, with no enemy in sight.

Photos, Imperial War Museum (above) and A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd. (below)

THE Vicomte de Vauvineur, our principal liaison officer, was blown to pieces with many of the 4th Dragoon Guards around him. Most of the other French officers attached to us were either killed or wounded. Major Tom Bridges' horse was shot under him and the bones of his face badly damaged as he crashed on the railway lines. Climbing into the sugar factory at which half a dozen German machine-guns were firing, he got out of a window and, dropping on to the back of a riderless horse, somehow got away. Although the casualties eventually turned out to be much less heavy than at first supposed, about three hundred of our magnificent horses—many of them had come, I heard, from Rothschild's stables when the war broke out—had been killed. Many more exact, lucid and authentic accounts of this exploit must have been written, but that was all I ever heard.

The London papers, hard up for any cheering news, transmuted this unfortunate affair into "a magnificent charge of the 9th Lancers—German gunners sabred!"

Colonel David Campbell, commanding the 9th Lancers, was, as we were told, offered a V.C. on the strength of it all, an honour he was said to have indignantly refused. "I want my squadrons back again, not V.C.s or medals!" He was afterwards awarded the V.C. for great personal bravery.

'LONG LINES of DEATH'

by Corporal John F. Lucy

THE author of this magnificent description of his experiences at Mons, who, with his brother, ran away from home and enlisted in the Royal Irish Rifles in 1912, was a Corporal in 1914. He rose to the rank of Sergeant and was commissioned 2nd-Lt. in 1917, retiring as a Captain. He was invalided home with multiple wounds during the 2nd battle of Ypres. He wrote a famous war book, 'There's a Devil in the Drum'



AFTER PROMOTION

In 1915 Corporal John Lucy was promoted sergeant, and this wartime photograph shows him with his "stripes up." It was not until more than twenty years after his war service ended that his remarkable book was published.

A STAFF OFFICER came perspiring from behind, and overtook us. He trotted past in a hurry, asking for the commanding officer. A hundred voices answered him: "At the head of the column, sir," and eight hundred pairs of eyes viewed him with that feeling of amusement peculiar to a mass of men finding entertainment in the efforts of an isolated individual.

The soldiers criticised his accent, his face, his seat, and his mount in turn, and then they cursed him because of the result of his coming. This was the order to turn about, and go back the road they had come, to the trenches abandoned that morning.

So about we went, and passing back to the rear of the line of trenches, took to open country in artillery formation, and thus extended went forward to occupy the earthworks.

THE old Army was familiar with the siting and digging of trenches, though it was generally trained for open warfare. The type of trench here was called a kneeling trench, as it was roughly only three feet deep, this being considered good enough for temporary occupation by infantry not expected to remain in it for the entire course of a battle. Our motto was "Attack, or counter-attack," and we had very little time for entrenchments, which, though they might be useful during a short period of temporary defence, were generally despised.

With many jokes the men settled into their defences and cheerfully waited for the enemy, presenting in his direction a line of first-class riflemen, each trained to fire fifteen well-applied shots a minute. Our two machine-guns poked their squat muzzles in support from their emplacements.

A battery of field-guns wheeled away from the main road, and drew up on the back slope of our position about three hundred yards to the rear. The menacing mouths of the eighteen-pounders slewed round in our direction and remained, while the horses were led rapidly away under cover. The activities of the smart-looking gunners slowed down, and the teams became still behind their gun-shields. A young subaltern came forward to our height as observation officer.

All then was ready, as far as we were concerned, for the battle of Mons.

FOUND BY THE ENEMY

AT half-past three in the afternoon, as nearly as I remember, the Germans discovered us before we saw them, and three or four dull thuds to our distant front followed by a whirring noise rapidly approaching us marked the discharge of enemy guns, and our first moment under shell-fire.

The salvo of shells passed over our heads, and burst about eighty yards in rear with a terrific clattering crash.

We were highly interested. More came and still more, all going over. The heads of our curious men appeared above the trenches looking back to see the bursts. "Look," they shouted, "a black one!" or "One only!" or "Four more whites." Some laughingly imagined themselves on butt duty on the rifle ranges at home, and shouted advice to the German gunners: "Washout!" "Another miss," and "Lower your sights." One wag, simulating great terror, cried: "Send for the police; there's going to be a row on here," and another, in mock despair: "Oh, mother, why did I desert you?"

Then the enemy gunners shortened, and the shells exploded above our trenches; and the men, already taken in hand for exposing themselves, crouched low.

I had been standing about by my ammunition carts on the open road immediately behind and parallel to our trenches, and not far from the commanding officer, who was, with his adjutant, fully exposed on a little rise nearer to the entrenched companies, when fragments of a bursting shell ripped and slashed all round us. Someone shouted "Take cover," and my men and I, leaving the carts to the drivers, took shelter as best we could in the roadside ditch, amateurishly choosing that side of the road farthest from the enemy.

The Germans now ranged well, and their shell-fire seemed to concentrate heavily on the trenches. The acrid smoke of the explosions blew about us, and screaming pieces of metal and shrapnel balls flew in all directions. One shrapnel bullet hit my pack, and I instinctively moved a little farther along the ditch to a burly sergeant, who laughed at me when I handed him the still hot ball for his inspection. I was too young to discern nervousness in the laugh. A dispatch-rider coming towards us on the road from the west fell off his motor-cycle when a shell burst over him. His antics distracted and amused us. The shell-fire became hotter and hotter, and we crouched farther down in our ditch. The commanding officer still remained exposed to all the fire, and his adjutant kept taking messages to the entrenched companies. Two stout fellows. Finally the shelling ceased, and we put up our heads to breathe more freely. Then we heard conch-like sounds—strange bugle calls. The German infantry, which had approached during the shelling, was in sight, and about to attack us.

DREADFUL RAIN OF SHELLS

NOT a shot had been fired from our trenches up to now, and the only opposition to the Germans had been made by our field-gun battery, which was heavily engaged behind us, and making almost as much clamour as the enemy shelling. To my mind it seemed that the whole battalion must have been

wiped out by that dreadful rain of shells, but apparently not.

In answer to the German bugles or trumpets came the cheerful sound of our officers' whistles, and the riflemen, casting aside the amazement of their strange trial, sprang to action. A great roar of musketry rent the air, varying slightly in intensity from minute to minute, as whole companies ceased fire and opened again. The satisfactory sharp blasts of the directing whistles showed that our machinery of defence was working like the drill book, and that the recent shelling had caused no disorganization. The clatter of our machine-guns added to the din.

For us the battle took the form of well-ordered, rapid rifle-fire at close range, as the field-grey human targets appeared, or were struck down. The enemy infantry advanced, according to one of our men, in "columns of masses," which withered away under the galling fire of the well-trained and coolly led Irishmen. The leading Germans fired standing, "from the hip," as they came on, but their scattered fire was ineffective and ignored. They crumpled up—mown down as quickly as I tell it, their reinforcing waves and sections coming on bravely and steadily to fall over as they reached the front line of the slain and wounded. Behind the death line thicker converging columns were being blown about by our field-guns.

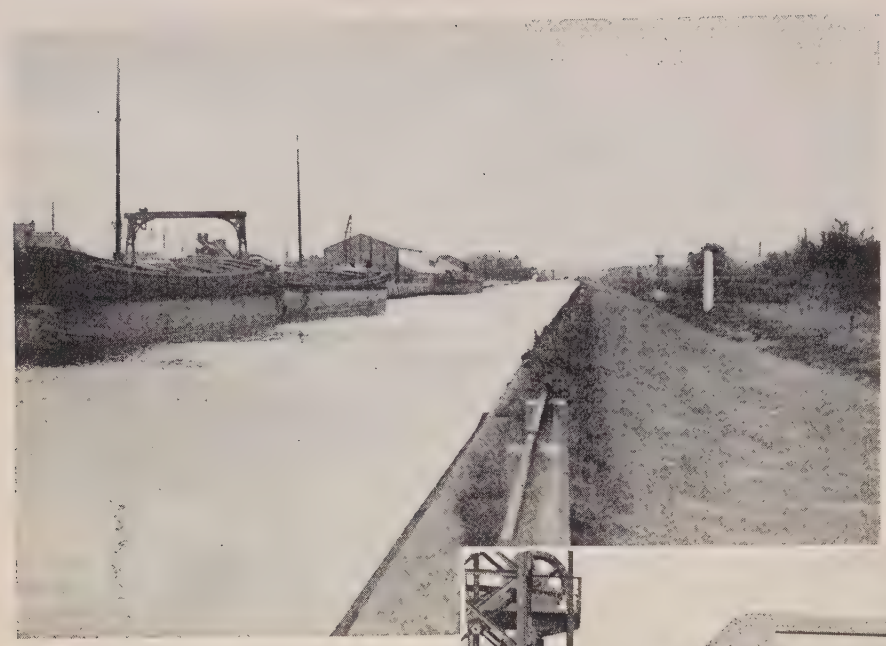
OUR rapid fire was appalling even to us, and the worst marksman could not miss, as he had only to fire into the "brown" of the masses of the unfortunate enemy, who on the fronts of two of our companies were continually and uselessly reinforced at the short range of three hundred yards. Such tactics amazed us, and after the first shock of seeing men slowly and helplessly falling down as they were hit, gave us a great sense of power and pleasure. It was all so easy.

MONS: TOWN OF IMMORTAL MEMORIES

The Mons-Condé Canal, scene of fierce fighting, is here seen from the belfry of the ancient church. It runs due west in a straight line to St. Ghislain and the Mariette Bridge, seen in the photograph in page 62, but here hidden in the smoke of the Black Country. The slag-heap in the centre is at Jemappes. On the left of the photograph is the nave of the church, and in the centre foreground is the railway station. The Grand' Place is seen in page 39.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.







TRANQUIL WATERS WHERE BRITISH BLOOD WAS SHED

The British line on the eve of the battle of Mons lay along the banks of the Mons-Condé Canal, a section of which, near Jemappes, is seen in the top photograph. The belfry of Mons can be discerned in the extreme distance. This section is also shown from the Mons belfry in page 61. In the lower photograph is the Mariette Bridge which marks the extreme limit of the stretch of canal seen in page 61. Other photographs are given in page 65.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright, A.P. Ltd.

The German survivors began to go back here and there from the line. The attack had been an utter failure. Soon all that remained was the long line of the dead heaped before us, motionless except for the limb movements of some of the wounded. Every battle seems endless to those taking part in it. All sense of time is lost, and the minutes appear to be hours. The sequence of events is lost, and the most unlikely tales are told by survivors. I am hazy as to what happened after the first great attack. I believe the Germans tried to come on again, but I am not sure. At any rate they did not succeed.

We were not without casualties, but for such a terrific lot of shooting they were very few indeed, and were actually the least we had in any battle in the war. Only three or four men were killed and the same number wounded. Most of the German shrapnel shells had burst too high, and their rifle-fire was hopeless.

A GERMAN shell burst on one of our machine-gunners, killing him instantly. His place was immediately taken at the gun by a lance-corporal who was shot almost at once through the arm. He, though wounded, continued to fire his gun, but he rather puzzled those near him by weeping at intervals, either with pain or fright. He would not, however, leave his gun until his arm stiffened.

One seldom hears a soldier crying, or raising his voice in any way, for that matter, when wounded. A shot through joints like the knee, or through the stomach, often makes a man shout out in great pain, but most wounds are merely numbing for the time. Most of the pain comes afterwards when the wounds are being dressed in hospital. Our commanding officer still stood on the high ground overlooking the scene of action. He now had fears for our ammunition supply. I had doled out a large number of boxes, and an officer presently came along and ordered all my carts away to be refilled. The sounds of battle had died down, and all was quiet except for some intermittent shelling from the Germans. I was to take my carts off to a refilling point controlled by the artillery a mile or so away to the south-east. It was getting dark and the lights of enemy camp fires could be seen in the distance. Nearer, their red-cross lanterns appeared here and there on our front, showing that they were attending to their wounded.

A mounted bombardier came to guide my carts, and off we went, passing along a road that appeared to me at times to traverse no-man's-land, for we passed British infantry facing north, on our right hand. They greeted us and joked at us from their trenches.

WE had had orders to hurry, and in the rush of our departure no check was made of the total amount of ammunition still in hand In order to travel lightly we had also been told to leave our packs behind us in our ditch. Having gone some distance in the darkness, I noticed that three of our four carts gave forth the heavy rumble of well-weighted vehicles, and I called a halt to examine them. I found the three almost full, and completing them from the fourth I took matters into my own hands and brought them back at once to the battalion, terrified lest it should be without a reserve of ammunition in case of another enemy attack. The fourth cart I ordered on to the refilling point, with two of my men and the bombardier.

It was after midnight when I rejoined the battalion, and reported my action. The officer who had sent me merely said: "Good, now go and rejoin the machine-gun section." I found the section fallen in on the road behind the trenches, and saw that our companies were also evacuating their positions.

All was very still and peaceful. Quiet words of command were passed along: "Number"; "Form fours"; "Right"; "Keep silence"; "Quick march." And off we went stealthily, in columns of fours from the battlefield of Mons.

In the morning the entire British Army was marching south in retreat.



THE CAMERONIANS ARE COMING!

The 1st Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) crossed to France with the original Expeditionary Force, and with four other infantry battalions formed the Lines of Communication Defence Troops. On August 22 the Cameronians with three of the other battalions were formed into the 19th Infantry Brigade, under Major-General L. G. Drummond. They are here seen halted by the roadside in a typical cobble-paved French village street on their way to the Front. Their achievements at Mons are noted in page 69.

Imperial War Museum

SECTION III

Mons: The Fighting Retreat

AUGUST 24 — SEPT. 6, 1914

ON the evening of August 23, 1914, there began the historic twelve-day Retreat from Mons. Accompanied by incredible hardships and marked by the most dogged heroism, it brought to light all the finest qualities of the 'Old Contemptibles.' Here eleven soldier authors, ranging from a lieut.-general to a humble private, tell their unforgettable experiences in uncensored and forcible terms. ¶ Capt. Gyde and Col. Osburn continue the vivid narrative. Capt. Wolrige Gordon and Brig.-Gen. Charteris speak of the thrilling mêlée at Landrecies; Pte. Hill and Pte. Richards of the stand at Le Cateau. ¶ Lieut.-Gen. Sir Tom Bridges gives his own account of one of the most famous episodes in the war supplemented by the accounts of Mr. Frederic Coleman and Col. Osburn of the day at St. Quentin when he encouraged failing spirits with toy drum and tin whistle. ¶ Others who write of the agonizing days of retreat are Corporal Denore, Capt. Needham and that distinguished Frenchman M. Paul Maze, who was attached to the British Army throughout the Great War.



CAPTAIN GYDE

The writer of this chapter is here seen as a subaltern in pre-war uniform. He served at Mons in the 2nd Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment, which formed part of the 6th Infantry Brigade. His Platoon was No. 7, B Company.

★ 15 August 23–25, 1914

The TERROR & TRIBULATION of those FATEFUL DAYS

by Capt. Arnold Gyde

IN war it is well known that he who sees most is likely to take least away. It was not the soldier's duty to gaze about him to see what was happening. He must enlarge his bit of trench, and be ready to meet the enemy when he himself is attacked. Therefore, if you ask a veteran of Mons about the battle, all he will be able to tell you as likely as not is, "Marching, and digging, and then marching mostly, sir."

The Company on the left was astride a railway embankment in front of a large mine. The Subaltern's Company was directly in front of the village itself; another Company to the right, the fourth in local reserve. The work of entrenchment began immediately. There was not time to construct a trench as laid down in the Manual of Field Engineering. Each man had to scrape with his entrenching tool as big a hole as he could before the enemy came upon him.

The Subaltern had many things to arrange. The "field of fire" had to be "cleared," any refuge behind which the enemy might lurk within two hundred yards of the trenches had to be, if possible, cut down. Sheaves of corn standing upright presented the first problem for the defence. Should he burn as many of them as he could, or overturn them, or beat them down? No, sheaves were not bullet-proof. A man could be shot behind them easily. He told off a small party to improve what natural obstacles—in this case wire fences—lay in front. He next went to arrange for the methods of effecting a retirement, if it should be necessary, breaking through one or two fences so that this could be effected in perfect order. As some of the houses were still occupied, he went to the owners, and not knowing the French for pick and shovel, said: "Monsieur, voulez-vous me prêter des choses pour faire des troux dans la terre?"

"Ah, oui, Monsieur, des pioches!" As many of these as possible were sent forward to the men, together with many pounds of biscuits which he bought from a shop, and buckets of water for the wounded.

SO busy had he been that he had almost been unable to interest himself in the battle which was already beginning to develop on the left. While he was in the village a stretcher was carried through. The body on it was covered with a mackintosh sheet, but the man's face was visible, and if he had not been so busily occupied, the ashen face might have upset him a little. It was absolutely calm, and its expression was contorted neither by pain nor hate nor fear—the face of one who was indifferent, and very, very weak.

With that he returned to the trenches.

"'Ere yer are, sir, I've started this 'un for yer," one man shouted. He threw off his equipment, and began to dig as he had never dug before. Each spadeful was safety for another inch of his body. It was fighting against time for protection of life and limb. The work was engrossing, exhilarating. Some of the men were too tired, too apathetic, too lazy to dig trenches as deep as they might have done. They had to be urged, cajoled, enticed, ordered.

The day was beautiful, hotter a great deal than those the men were accustomed to. The Senior Subaltern had been occupying a small hut as an advanced post. The enemy came within his range in some force, but having the presence of mind to restrain his men from firing, he managed to withdraw without loss. All the while the cavalry were being rapidly driven in.

THIS was about three o'clock, and the sound of a terrific bombardment could be heard from some miles to the left. This puzzled them, as it was naturally expected that the battle would develop from the north-east. The regiment on the right had been occupying a small copse; this was set alight to the rear of them, and they were forced to draw back through it, which must have been a terrible operation.

Fresh meat, in the form of a stew, was brought out to the trenches at about three o'clock. The bombardment on the left, like a terrific thunderstorm, rolled on till dusk. A few aeroplanes flew overhead, looking like huge birds in the blue sky. As yet the troops found it very hard to distinguish the Germans from the English, although several pamphlets had been issued on the subject.

As evening drew on, the trenches began to assume a more workmanlike aspect, although when one got down deeper than three feet the ground was like chalk and very difficult to cut.

Thus ended that memorable Sunday, when the English line, the last hope of

the French, was pierced at Mons, when the appearance of a huge force, above all strong in cavalry, appeared on the left of the English line, and rendered the whole strategic position of the Allies so dangerous that there was nothing for it but to fall back in order to avert a terrible catastrophe.

Intermittently throughout the whole night firing continued. A searchlight had been played continually on the lines, and if anything, the artillery duel began before it was light.

THIS was his first opportunity to watch shell fire. The shells sailed overhead so slowly that he half expected to see them in their flight. The noise they made was very difficult to describe. They hurtled, they whizzed, they shrieked, they sang. He could imagine the thing spinning in its flight, creating a noise something like steam escaping jerkily from an engine.

An English battery was firing from somewhere unseen on the right, to meet an attack apparently launched on the left. Furious messages were passed up the line that the artillery were firing on their own men, and whether this was true or not, soon afterwards the attack ceased.

At about seven o'clock the major gave orders to withdraw his platoon when the company on his right should retire. This surprised him; for, knowing nothing of the general situation, he had felt that they would hang on and fight the battle out then and there, to the last gasp. He gave orders to his section commanders, and then lay down to await the development of events.

AT about nine o'clock a general retirement seemed to be taking place on the right. It is a very difficult thing to pick upon exactly the right moment to retire. If you retire too early, you allow the enemy to advance without having inflicted sufficient loss, *i.e.* you allow him to succeed too cheaply, to say nothing of rendering the position of units on your flanks precarious. On the other hand, if you hang on to your position too long, you become committed to a close fight from which it is almost impossible to withdraw without the most serious losses.

There are no hedges in Belgium; the ground was perfectly open, and the subaltern could easily see what was happening on the right. It seemed to him that some unit delayed too long, for the rest of the line showed signs of envelopment. Eventually, however, the retirement to the village was effected quietly, and without loss. He led his platoon to a second defensive position about a mile behind the village, but already shells were beginning to drop around, and even beyond it.

It was from this point that the great "Retreat from Mons" really began. The road in front of the battalion was hit by one or two shells. Apparently it was being "searched," and so the battalion was hastily moved into the open fields, assuming what is known as "Artillery Formation," *i.e.* small collections of troops, moving on the same objective, with "irregular distances and depths." By this means many lives must have been saved. After about a mile of very hurried marching through turnip fields and stubble, the road was again reached, and the battalion was apparently out of the enemy's range.





SNAPSHOTS WHERE THE SHELLS FLEW

These two remarkable photographs were taken by British soldiers who actually took part in the battle of Mons. That just above shows a company of infantry on the banks of the canal, their only line of retreat being the barge which is being converted into a bridge. Top is a machine-gun detachment firing at the enemy from the bank of the canal.

The heat was beginning to be intense. The men had marched for the last three days almost incessantly, and without sufficient sleep. Sunday night in the firing line had been full of excitement of battle, and all Monday morning had been spent at digging trenches. Imagine the state of the men! Dirty from digging, with a four days' growth of beard, bathed in sweat, eyes half closed with want of sleep, "packs" missing; lurching with the drunken torpor of fatigue, their own mothers would not have known them! There was no time to rest and sleep, when rest and sleep were the most desirable things on earth. Those men assuredly knew all the agonies of a temptation to sell for a few moments' sleep their liberty and lives.

DURING a halt the subaltern threw himself so heavily in a cabbage patch that his revolver became unhitched from his belt, and when the halt was over he lurched to his feet and went on, without noticing its loss. Careless? Perhaps, but one of his men lost his rifle and never noticed it, because he was carrying a spade! There was, however, one consolation.





FIRST V.C.'s OF THE WORLD WAR

Lieutenant M. J. Dease (right) is generally credited with having won the first V.C. of the World War. He subsequently died of his wounds, and his grave in St. Symphorien Cemetery is seen above. Four V.C.'s were won on the first day of fighting at Mons, another being awarded to Captain Theodore Wright, whose photograph is the farther of the two, and his heroism also, like that of Lt. Dease, cost him his life.

The Germans had, for the time, been shaken off; although the noise of battle could still be heard uncomfortably near on the left. But if one waits long enough, the hottest sun must go to rest, and drag its horrible day with it.

About six o'clock the battalion at last came up with its "cookers" and transport. Glory of glories, rest had at last been achieved! Never had bacon been so welcome, never tea so desirable, so stimulating, so wonderful.

The quartermaster-sergeant had some terrifying tales for the company mess about disasters on less fortunate parts of the line; but there was no time to go into the matter, for the battalion was ordered to parade immediately. This was the last straw! The men had been looking forward to, and longing for, a good sleep that night. Every aching limb of their bodies cried out for rest, and here they were going to be put on outpost duty for yet another night. Imagine their state of mind! Is there a word to cope with the situation? Assuredly not, though great efforts were made! Darkness fell so swiftly that the officers had scarcely time to "site" the position of their trenches. Then the weary business of entrenching began again. Have you ever heard the tinkering, tapping, thudding sounds made by entrenching implements or spades? None of the men who heard it that night will ever forget it. It will give them a memory of energy, promoted by the desire for safety, clogged by heat and fatigue. At about eleven or twelve at night a fair cover had been made, and the long-sought rest became possible at last—not, however, the sleep that the subaltern had been longing for all day, not complete oblivion to body and mind, for the fear of surprise was upon him even in his sleep, and he knew that if his precautions should prove insufficient, he would have to answer for sixty good lives. In addition, there was the cold of the cloudless night, and the clinging wetness of the dew. These things would not have allowed him to sleep, even if he could.



THE TWO WHO HAVE SURVIVED

The other soldiers who won the Victoria Cross on the first day of the battle of Mons were Cpl. C. A. Jarvis (left), who was awarded it for blowing up a bridge at Jemappes under heavy fire, and Pte. S. F. Godley (right), who was with Lieut. Dease when his gallant stand with a machine-gun section won him the V.C. In 1938 the citizens of Mons presented Mr. Godley with a plaque bearing the arms of the town in recognition of the part he played in defending it.

A FRESH day began very similar to the last. There were no signs of the enemy to the immediate front, so the work of entrenching continued. A "fatigue party" went to draw rations, which were distributed at about seven o'clock. This was their first introduction to "bully" beef and hard biscuits. Also, wonder of wonders, a "mail" was distributed!

He was lying in the corn just beginning to eat a biscuit and read a letter,



LAST LONG SLEEP OF FRIEND AND FOE NEAR MONS

Hautrage Military Cemetery, nine miles north-west of Mons, is noteworthy for the fact that here friend and foe lie side by side, for in it are buried the British and German soldiers who fell in August 1914. In the upper photograph the German crosses can be seen, while in the background are British tombstones, a closer view of which is seen below. On the gate post of the cemetery it is also described as "Hautrage Militar Friedhof."

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

when the voice of the senior subaltern called him from somewhere up the line. Thinking that he had got another letter, or something of that sort, he did not wait to put letters and rations in his haversack, but went straight to his senior. "A party of Uhlans, about 100 strong, have broken through the line farther up. We have got to prevent them from taking us by surprise on this flank. So you had better take a couple of sections to keep them off." Commands on the battlefield must never be didactic and narrow. Tell a man what to do, give him his mission—and how he will carry it out, the methods he will employ are for himself to determine.

He hurriedly collected his men and took up a position astride a road that ran behind, parallel to the lines. In peace-time manoeuvres one had generally been told the direction from which to expect the enemy hours before he actually came; now, when the great game was being played in real earnest, he found that he had to guess. The Uhlans might have come unsuspecting along the road, in which case the game would be his; or they might come blundering along from somewhere in the rear and enfilade him, in which case the game would most assuredly be theirs. Fortunately, the Uhlans did not come at all.

Meanwhile, a very rare and lucky circumstance was beginning to be apparent. The enemy were actually attacking from the direction they were



MOMENT OF PEACE ON THE GREAT RETREAT

Summer sun shone on the British Army on the retreat from Mons, and in this peaceful garden of a farmhouse the 1st Cameronians look the picture of contentment. But the Germans are not far behind and there is also an enemy in the air, for on the left of the photograph Major C. B. Vandeleur is watching through his binoculars a Taube that is following them up. On his right is Colonel Robertson, seen also in the opposite page.

Imperial War Museum

expected! But this was only to be a rearguard action, so he never saw his rations or letters again, after all.

The senior subaltern was left to "hold out" in a small cottage in the firing-line until the rest had "got away." With characteristic forethought and presence of mind he not only got his men away without loss, but seized all luxuries in the place!

As on the day before, in getting clear away from the enemy the company had to pass a large stretch of ground which was being literally peppered with shrapnel. The noise was louder than it had seemed on the previous day. Thunder seemed muffled beside it. Moreover, thunder rolled—seemed to spread itself into space—but not so with bursting shells. The clap of sound caused by one is more confined, more localized, more intense. The earth seems to quiver under it. It suggests splitting, a terrible splitting. Only the nerves of the young and healthy can stand it. It would not be so bad if one could see the thing whistling through the air, or even when it bursts; but one cannot.

After the crash a man may scream or moan, totter and fall, but for all one can see he might have been struck down by the wrath of God.

The road safely reached, the retreat was continued, but under very trying circumstances for the company. The brigadier in charge of the rearguard action, not having sufficient cavalry at his disposal, ordered the company to take up the rôle of flank-guard to the retreating column. The company, extended over a long front, had to move across rough country, intersected with all sorts of obstacles, at the same rate as the infantry on the road, "which," as Euclid says, "is impossible." In war, however, the logically "impossible" is not impossible really, only very fatiguing.

Things grew from bad to worse. The men could no longer keep their places in the ranks. If one had seen them and not known the spirit of the British Army, one would have thought that they were a dispirited, defeated rabble. Yet, in their own minds, the officers and men had no doubts about what was going to happen: they were going to fight even though they might not sleep, and their determination was shaken not one whit. There was a very welcome halt for an hour in the town for the men to fill their water-bottles and rest.

The men's feet were beginning to suffer terribly, for the road along which they were marching had been cobbled—cobbles, not as we know them in England, but rounded on the surface; cobbles that turned one's ankles; cobbles that the nails of one's boots slipped on, that were metallic, that "gave" not the fraction of a millimetre. The hobnails in the subaltern's boots began to press through the soles. To put his feet to the ground was an agony, and they swelled with the pain and heat. The bones of them ached with bearing his weight. They longed for air, to be dangling in some cool, babbling stream.

The mental strain of the morning's action was as nothing compared to the physical pain of the afternoon. The colonel, seeing his plight, offered to lend him his horse, but he thanked him and declined, as there is a sort of grim pride in "sticking it." The men, too, took an unreasonable objection to seeing their officers avail themselves of these lifts. Then the heavens were kind and it rained; they turned faces to the clouds and let the drops fall on their features, unshaven, glazed with the sun, and clammy with sweat. They took off their hats and extended the palms of their hands. It was refreshing, invigor-



WHICH WAY WILL THE ENEMY COME?

Though the 1st Cameronians had fought at Mons they had not been included in the 2nd Corps, commanded by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, until the day before the battle of Le Cateau, but they took their full part in that heroic stand. In this hitherto unpublished photograph officers of the regiment are seen in consultation on August 25, 1914, the day before the battle. Left to right are Captain and Adjutant J. C. Stormont-Darling, Major F. A. C. Hamilton, Lieut.-Colonel P. R. Robertson, and (on horseback) Captain A. R. MacAllan.

Imperial War Museum

Approximate Scale

0 5 10 15 20

BELGIUM





BRUSSELS

LILLE



Condé-Mons Canal

Condé

Thulin

Mons

Soignies

Elouges



Péronnes

Binche

Givry



Malplaquet

Bavai

Maubeuge

Forêt de Mormal

Hargnies

Beaumont

Marbilles

Landrécies

Etroeungt

Le Cateau

Wassigny

Etreux

Iron





Gricourt

St Quentin

AMIENS













Ham
Cerizy
Thenelles
Chauny
La Fere
R. Serre
Noyon
R. Oise
Anizy-le-Château
R. Aisne
Soissons
Vailly
R. Aisne
Bourg
Forêt de Compiègne
Haramont
Venizel
R. Oise
Crépy-en-Valois
Villers-Cotterets
R. Vesle
RHEIMS
Nanteuil
R. Marne
Marolles-sur-Ourcq
ChateauThierry
R. Ourcq
La Ferté-sur-Jouarre
PARIS
Meaux
R. Marne
Romeny
Coulommiers
Brie-Comte Robert
Rozoy

SCENE OF AN UNEXAMPLED FEAT OF ARMS

The retreat from Mons was, in the words of General Macready, quoted in page 45, a feat of arms unexampled in the history of the world. This sketch map shows the area over which the British Expeditionary Force retreated almost to the fortifications of Paris. The line on the right marks roughly the retreat of the 1st Corps, that on the left the retreat of the 2nd and 3rd Corps. Units of the retiring army were, however, spread out over the whole of the shaded area. Photographs of some of the most important places passed on the retreat are given, the names being linked to them by white lines.



WHEN WALLS HARDLY MADE A PRISON: REMARKABLE PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AT MONS IN AUGUST 1914

As the German Army advanced from Belgium into France, many French prisoners were sent back to Mons. Here, but a few days after the British had left Mons, Belgian women are seen filling baskets let down from the prison walls with fresh provisions, an act of charity only possible in those early days. The fall of Maubeuge, on September 6, 1914, brought a fresh influx of French prisoners to Mons, for 35,000 troops were captured by the Germans when the fortress fell.

Mons Museum

ating, a tonic. Somebody had heard the general [Brig.-Gen. R. H. Davis, C.B., of the N.Z. Staff Corps] say that they should have a rest, a real rest, that night. High hopes filled weary hearts. It got about that they were to be billeted in that suburb of Landrecies through which they had passed, Maroilles.

At about five o'clock on that aching day, Maroilles was reached. All through the streets there were halts and delays, intolerable to those in whom the want of rest had become a positive passion. At last the members of the billeting party were sighted—here at last was rest and sleep.

Many a slip 'twixt cup and lip! The general, followed by the brigade-major and an orderly, came trotting down the road. A few hasty commands were thrown at the adjutant, accompanied by gesticulations towards the road leading out of the town. Assuredly some fresh devilment was rife, and for the moment, anyway, the cup had slipped. An attack on the town was expected by a large detachment of cavalry. The wretched men had to be hurried out, to line a row of hedges to the west of the town. They waited about half an hour, but saw not a sign of the famous square-crested Uhlan helmet. It appeared that the enemy had been content with destroying the canal bridge, which formed the communication between Maroilles and Landrecies, and had then withdrawn. There was a whole brigade in Maroilles, which was therefore cut off from the rest of the division and from its natural line of retreat. That, however, did not greatly upset the rank and file, and billets were at last achieved.

The subaltern found that he was billeted in the same house as the headquarters of the battalion—colonel, second in command, adjutant, etc. His servant brought him his valise from the regimental transport, and he began to change the offending boots for a fresh pair, without nails.

Someone procured a footbath, and ablutions began.

THE medical officer came in to say that the colonel seemed to be very ill. The subaltern was glad he had declined the offer of his horse. He then began to shave and wash. Just as he was in the middle of this, with his boots and puttees off, his captain came in to say that his platoon was being sent off as infantry escort to a battery of artillery.

By the time he had redressed himself, the battery and his platoon had both gone. The streets were filled by French peasants, as usual excited and garrulous, and by men settling down to their billets. The subaltern failed absolutely to discover what route his platoon had taken, but pursuing the road along which they had come, he soon left the town.

It was raining and blowing most fiercely; the darkness was intense, otherwise absolute silence reigned. Suddenly, excitedly, a voice, saturated with fear, cried out from the darkness, "Who goes there?" A face, with a bayonet in front of it, loomed up from the side of the road. "Friend!" this tersely. "Sentry, have you seen a battery of artillery and a platoon of South Staffordshires pass here?"

"No, sir; you're nearly in the outpost line. There's only Royal Berkshires in front, sir."

So they had evidently not come this way. Where next? They must be found. He felt that to lose his men would be a sort of dishonour. Even while he was thinking a shout was wafted on the wind out of the darkness and chasing it, overtaking it almost, a rifle shot. It was as if a match had been applied to the whole line. With the rapidity of wind the crackling spread to either side.

SOON the whole line in front was blazing away into the darkness. Should the subaltern stop and try to lend assistance where he was, or hurry back to his own unit? Before long a couple of men rushed along the road crying out for stretcher bearers, and he learnt from one of them that in the darkness and confusion of the retreat, British had been fighting with British. The



THE CAVALRY COME BACK THROUGH A STILL SMILING LAND

This cavalry regiment is retreating from Mons, and on the grass verge of the road the horses have been put to a trot. Here, as in other photographs of the Retreat, the striking point is the excellent order of the troops, despite their recent terrible experiences. They are passing through a fair land, as yet little touched by war, but which before the invader was finally driven out was to become the nightmare of ruin, mud and swamps in which the British Army fought heroically for four long years.

Imperial War Museum



WHERE THE RETREAT ROLLED BACK THROUGH MAROILLES

On the evening and night of August 26–27, 1914, the village of Maroilles was the scene of dramatic incidents on the retreat from Mons. It was here that the "Subaltern," who tells his story in these pages, rejoined his regiment. But during the retreat Maroilles saw heroic deeds done. Two detachments of the 15th Hussars held the Germans at bay for an hour, while all the time the movement of the troops was impeded by the congestion of supply lorries and refugees with their vehicles along the village street, seen above as it is today.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

pitch darkness shrouded every action with a ghastly uncertainty.

Then news came through that another bridge had been captured. A fresh company arrived in reinforcement. There was nothing for it but to effect a retreat before the morning light could betray their weakness to the Germans. Apparently, however, the capture of the bridge had only been a precautionary measure, for the enemy did not press his attack home.

The subaltern saw that the best thing he could do would be to return to the remainder of his battalion at Maroilles. If he were to grope about the countryside in the dark, looking for "that battery," he would most likely be shot down for a spy; moreover, in a little over two hours the morning would dawn. So he trudged back to Maroilles.

He felt that he ought to have been on the verge of exhaustion from lack of food and from fatigue, and he vaguely wondered why he was not. The truth was that the excitement of the attack, coupled with the chill of the night, had restored him in mind and body, although he had marched over twenty miles on the previous day, had had no sleep that night, and no meal since the evening of the battle of Mons.

The battalion was taking its rest as well as it could on the pavement of the street, so as to be ready to move at a minute's notice. The subaltern found his major, and reported that he had failed to find his platoon. The major was too sleepy to be annoyed. "I expect they'll turn up," he said. "We got some food in that house there; I should go and see if there is any left if I were you."

Followed a couple of hours or so of interrupted sleep, disturbed by the cold. Then came dawn, and with it the shells whizzing and bursting over the town.

The retreat of the brigade had been cut off by the breaking of the canal bridge the previous evening, so the battalion had to retire to the east, and not to the west. As the subaltern marched along he reflected with grim amusement on the ease with which the most confirmed Sybarite can get accustomed to hardships. At home, if he did anything early on an empty stomach, he very soon felt faint and tired. Now, this was taken as a matter of course; one was only too glad to restore the circulation to the limbs, cramped with the cold and damp of dawn.

An hour or so later they ran into a French battalion, apparently preparing to occupy an outpost position along the bank of the road. This was a cheering sight. Tommy, who had expected to fight mixed up in some weird way with "le petit Piou-Piou," had not yet seen a Frenchman in action. In a vague way he fancied that "the Frenchies" had "let him down." He knew nothing of the battles of Charleroi and Namur, nor of the defence of Verdun, and the French were getting dreadfully unpopular with him. Things were thrown at anyone who ventured to sing the "Marseillaise."

"Oh, *'ere* they are; so they *'ave* come. Well, that's somethink."

The "Marseillaise" broke out once again.

"Look 'ere, Bill, there's too much of this ruddy 'Marslasie' abaht this 'ere show."

"'Ow d'you mean, Sam?"

"Why, it's all 'March on, March on.' I'm ruddy sick of it!"

HOW WE SAVED HAIG'S CORPS at LANDRECIES

by Capt. R. Wolrige Gordon, M.C.

CAPTAIN WOLRIGE GORDON was with the 2nd Battalion Grenadier Guards from August 12 to Sept. 16, 1914. He was present at the memorable 'scrap' at Landrecies, August 25, which, but for the quick action which he describes so vividly, might have resulted in a serious blow to the British 1st Army Corps under Sir Douglas Haig

ON August 25 we marched on past Maroilles to Landrecies. Here we were told we were quite safe and could get a good rest. We were billeted in a school, the officers all provided with nice clean beds, but no sooner were we comfortable than the "alarm" sounded. And so we had to stand to arms.

I remember seeing the man who brought the message riding through the streets. A French gendarme, he galloped on shouting "Les Allemands! Les Allemands!" and never stopped even to answer questions. We again turned in, but we were cautioned to be ready to fall in at a moment's notice. By this time it was almost dark and we proceeded to get on with our dinner, when suddenly heavy machine-gun fire broke out from the north-west side of the town. The alarm—the only time I ever heard the bugle during the war—was sounded and we had to fall in—alas! without our dinner.

The 3rd Coldstream went forward at once and were forced to occupy the outposts of the town where the shots appeared to be coming from. Nos. 2 and 3 companies went across the canal and railway bridges to support, if required, and formed two sides of a square. No. 1 occupied the canal bridge and banks, while No. 4 company went to guard the roads to the east—the one by which we had come in and the one leading south to Etreux and Guise.

The story of Landrecies is roughly this: When the Coldstream arrived at the outskirts of the town, one of their companies under Monk went forward with their machine-gun to establish outposts. They heard in the distance men coming along singing "La Marseillaise." Monk and his sergeant-major and runner went forward to meet them. They appeared to be French. Directly they saw Monk they advanced, and two or three of them gathered around shouting "Vivent les Anglais!" Something or other warned the sergeant-major, who went back in front to the company. The supposed Frenchmen followed. Directly they reached the machine-gun they knocked Bingham, the officer in charge, into the ditch and seized the machine-gun. The company bayoneted them. They turned out to be Germans dressed up as Frenchmen who intended to creep unawares into the town. It was just getting dark, and all the Coldstream could do was to put a bell on a rope 150 feet distant across the road. It was not long before the Germans attacked in force, coming down the road in fours.

The Coldstream waited until the bell tinkled and then fired five rounds rapid fire. The German losses must have been colossal. The Germans did this three times. Then they brought up two field-guns and started shelling right down the road. These shells were taking the Coldstreamers' heads off and bursting

WHERE THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS BELLED THE GERMAN CAT

It was across the road seen in this photograph that the Coldstream Guards drew a rope to which a bell was attached, to give warning of the approach of the Germans, who were following them in close pursuit. This photograph shows the road in Landrecies as it is today—a quiet street in a country town where the memory of events that made history has not yet faded.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

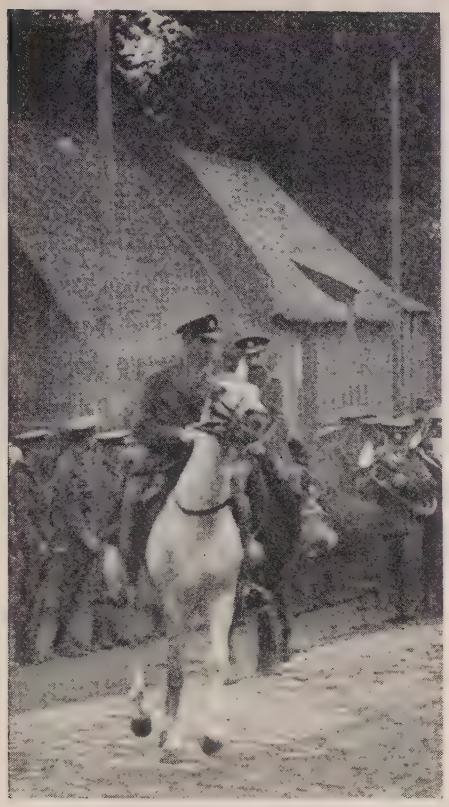




BY THIS FOREST CAME BRITISH KHAKI AND GERMAN FIELD GREY TO FIGHT AT LE CATEAU

Photo, A. J. Forrett, copyright A.P. Ltd.

The Forêt de Mormal was an extremely important factor in the battle of Le Cateau and the incidents which led up to that critical engagement. Its southern extremity lies about a mile north of Landrecies, and it was here that General Charteris made the reconnaissance described in this chapter. On August 25 British troops had marched in sweltering heat along the two roads which border the Forest, always fearful of a German flank attack, while a few hours later the pursuing German Army marched southward with the same fear of a surprise from among the trees. When they debouched they found the British 2nd Corps making its heroic stand at Le Cateau.



in the town 2,000 yards away. The situation was most serious. The Coldstream were in three ranks, lying, kneeling and standing in this road, and were having heavy casualties. I can see General Fielding to this day with his sword drawn, drawing a line with his sword, saying, " Remember, not one man of the Coldstream goes back over this line." Luckily, two of our guns happened to get direct hits on the guns of the Germans, and the Germans retired.

Meanwhile, everything was confusion behind us. Houses had all been put into a state of defence, and barricades in the streets, most of the officers' kits forming a considerable part of some of the barricades. We were considering what was to be done when the Germans suddenly cleared off. About 3 a.m. the Irish Guards came up to make a counter attack at dawn, but the artillery supporting the enemy having retired, we started evacuating the town. First, the 3rd Coldstream went, then the Irish Guards, and finally the Grenadiers. The 2nd Coldstream was sent on some time before to take up a position to cover the retirement of the rest of the brigade. No. 12 platoon was the last to go. Such was our night's rest !

The 3rd Battalion Coldstream lost two officers killed and three officers wounded. Also 90 men killed and wounded. We lost Second-Lieutenant Vereker and 10 men wounded. The German casualties were about 800, almost entirely from rifle and machine-gun fire.

The brigade retired down the Guise road ; we lost our food cart. The march was very slow, as the men were dead tired. Why the Germans let us away so easily is hard to say ; they did not shell Landrecies heavily till long after we had left it. They might have annihilated the brigade as it withdrew.

WHERE THE GUARDS SHOWED THEIR METTLE

Here is the northern entry of the road from Mons into Landrecies. The photograph in the previous page shows the spot at which the Coldstream Guards made a memorable stand, but it was on the road seen in th's photograph, when they had been driven from their first position, that General Fielding (seen on the left), sword in hand, called on his men to hold the line, and they, with other Guards Battalions, saved the 1st Army Corps.

Photo (below), A. J. Insall, (copyright A.P. Ltd.; (left) Imperial War Museum

AFFAIR of MATTRESSES in LANDRECIES

by Brig.-General Charteris, C.M.G., D.S.O.

GENERAL CHARTERIS, in August 1914 Military Secretary to Sir Douglas Haig, had a most anxious part to play in the attack on Landrecies, but he revives here some genuinely humorous aspects of those critical hours

JUST about 4 p.m. we reached Landrecies, where we were to stop for the evening and until 2 a.m. when we were to march again. Though I had been riding almost all day, I was pretty tired, for I had been up most of the previous night. As soon as I had got my billet I lay down to sleep. I had just dozed off when I was awakened by a great disturbance in the street. Refugees were streaming in, shouting that the Uhlans were hard at their heels, and some of them flourished Uhlan lances and accoutrements to prove their statements. D. H. [Sir Douglas Haig] told me to get on my horse and, with one orderly, to ride back and investigate.



SCENE OF A WARTIME STORY

In the centre of the town of Landrecies stands the Hôtel de Ville, seen above, in the neighbourhood of which the strange incidents related by General Charteris in this chapter took place.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

Just N. of Landrecies, where the refugees reported the Germans to be, there is a thick wood [the Forêt de Mormal „ *see* p. 76]. There the two main roads converge on to a bridge over a river. I got Dukani and with an orderly rode about 1½ miles up one road, and then back to the bridge and up the other.

There was absolutely nothing to be seen or heard, and I returned to Landrecies and reported to D. H. that it seemed to be a false alarm, or, in any case, an exaggerated report. There could be no large body of troops within some miles of us. It must have been about 6 o'clock, and I lay down again to rest.

I think I was asleep, though it cannot have been more than ten minutes later, when I was aroused by sharp rifle-fire and some shelling. Almost immediately after reports came in that Landrecies was surrounded. There was a good deal of confusion and some amusing incidents. D. H. ordered the whole town to be organized for defence, barricades to meet across the roads with furniture and anything else handy, all secret papers, etc., to be destroyed. He sent me off to prepare a big school building for defence, giving me a couple of companies of Guards as working party.

For once he was quite jolted out of his usual placidity. He said, "If we are caught, by God, we'll sell our lives dearly." . . . .

It was a weird scene in the village street; men were throwing mattresses and chairs out of the windows for the barricades, which others were making as best they could. The few inhabitants left were protesting feebly. The Guards had arrested and tied up a French officer who had lost his head and was making an ass of himself. I saw one rather pompous and unpopular staff officer walking towards me, and a man at an upper window taking deliberate aim with one of those great soft French mattresses, and hitting him fair and square with it. Down went the pompous one, buried in the feather mattress, to the immense glee of the men. He was, of course, none the worse for it, but very, very angry.



EYE-WITNESS AT LANDRECIES

The author of this chapter is here seen as he was in 1914. General Charteris retired from the Army in 1922, having done distinguished service in India after the war, as he had done before it.

THEN I heard a great rattle of revolver shots quite close, and I saw an officer, obviously very excited, discharging his revolver down a street. I asked a military policeman who was near by what was in the street. "Nothing, sir," he said with a smile, "but some officers' horses." So I asked him, "Why the —— don't you stop him?" "Well, you see, sir," he said, "he is a full colonel, and his own horse is there with the others, and besides he's very excited and it may ease him." So I asked the "full colonel" if he would care to come and help me with my job instead of shooting horses, and he quite amicably agreed. So off we went together.

The next day (Wednesday) was the first full day of the retreat, and it was a very anxious time for the Staff and terrible for the troops. We started at 5 a.m. and marched steadily until 4 p.m. (seemed much longer than that), steadily plodding along a dusty road in a glaring, blazing sun. We only halted a few minutes in each hour's march. Always there was the sound of the guns—now distant, now seeming much closer. The battalion commanders knew what we were in for, and made the men lie down at every halt. At first the men resented this, but as the hours slowly passed they dropped as if hit immediately a halt was ordered, and were asleep almost before their bodies reached the ground.



HORSES HONOURED in their COUNTRY'S SERVICE

IN quiet paddock and loose box there live today many of the horses who shared so nobly the peril of their masters in the Great War. Nearly a quarter of a million were killed. The survivors are advanced in years, but have by no means lost the gallant spirit which enabled them to endure hardship and danger at the call of duty. Here is shown a unique collection of portraits of some of these old pensioners, happy and contented in their declining years

HORSES fulfilled their hazardous tasks in war with extraordinary patience and courage. They would stand up unflinchingly to shell fire, which terrified them, and, still worse, conquer the agonies of fear always excited by the smell of blood. They were slaughtered by bombs and high explosive shells, gassed, drowned in the mud, exposed to every kind of hardship of weather, and sometimes kept for weeks without proper stabling. One of the saddest losses occurred on the first day of the retreat from Mons during the cavalry action at Elouges (*see* page 59), when three hundred fine horses were massacred, many of them high-bred animals from Lord Rothschild's stables. Altogether during the war 225,856 of these faithful animals lost their lives. By 1917 there were 869,931 horses on active service, and it is astonishing but true that the total weight of the forage which it was necessary to export to the various theatres of war was greater than that of the total amount of shells and other ammunition sent out to feed the guns.

There are still living in peaceful retirement in this country and in Belgium a number of gallant old horses who took part in the Great War. One of the most famous of them is Warrior, thirty-year-old charger, belonging to Lord Mottistone. In August 1914 Warrior landed at Havre with his master, then Colonel Jack Seely, served through the whole length of the war, and returned to take part in the Victory

TWENTY YEARS AFTER THEY KNOW PEACE

Few of the horses that served in the war still survive, but those that do are well cared for. A Belgian lady, the Duchesse de Troy, has traced many of those that were left in Belgium and has bought for them an honourable retirement. At her château near Brussels, seen below, they enjoy an old age of peace and ease in the park and stables. Above is Sir Percy Laurie's famous charger, "Quicksilver," made familiar to Londoners by his many public appearances in processions wearing his war medals on his bridle.

Photo, Our Dumb Friends' League



march through London. One of this old horse's earliest experiences was of the long street at Le Cateau where, when the British Army was advancing to battle at Mons, Field-Marshal Sir John French's headquarters staff were cheered as saviours by the unfortunate civilian population waving little Union Jacks. Sir John French himself often rode Warrior.

His master, Lord Mottistone, tells of the true heroism which Warrior showed in conquering his fear of shell fire. Indeed, he finally became so used to the sound of battle that he seemed to be irresistibly attracted towards the scene. More than once Lord Mottistone had other horses shot under him, but Warrior bore a charmed life. He survived the battles of Ypres, of the Somme, of Arras, the March '18 retreat, of Cambrai, and, indeed, put in an appearance in most notable actions. Once Warrior carried his master fifty miles on a night ride to a threatened part of France. He became so well known to the troops that it was the horse, not his popular master, who received their greetings. "Here comes old Warrior," they would shout as he trotted past them.





Fox Photos, Keystone

THREE WAR VETERANS

Left, Lord Mottistone (in 1914 Brig.-Gen. Seely) with his famous war horse, Warrior, who showed, as his master says, true heroism throughout the war. Above, two horses less famed who "did their bit." Daisy (left) served in the R.F.A.; Tommie was in the Royal Defence Corps. Both now enjoy rest at South Mimms.

One of Lord Mottistone's friends thus wrote about this famous horse: "Unselfish loyalty, indomitable courage, exhibiting an entire disregard of danger and a generous nature, always giving of his best. These were qualities inherent in Warrior."

After the war Warrior came back to his master's estate in the Isle of Wight, but his retirement has been full of excitement, riding to hounds and winning a point-to-point in 1922. Now, at the age of thirty, old Warrior still carries his master and is supremely happy in his loose box and his paddock.

One of the most widely known of the war veterans is Colonel Sir Percy Laurie's Quicksilver. While Sir Percy Laurie was Deputy Assistant Commissioner and chief of the mounted branch at Scotland Yard, Quicksilver, a beautiful grey, was a familiar figure in every London procession of importance. He, too, was in the Victory march and attended the funerals of all the great war leaders.

His war service started on the Somme in 1916, when he joined General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston's staff and was handed over to Sir Percy Laurie. He was ridden continuously until the end of the war, and was wounded by shrapnel at the battle of the Somme. After a spell in occupied Germany he came to London in 1919, when his master joined the police. Quicksilver



SOLDIERS' FRIENDS WHO ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

Britain as well as Belgium has done her part in rescuing old war horses from a life of servitude and giving them a happy old age. The Brussels market, among others, has been carefully watched for horses branded with the broad arrow of the British Army and many have been found, overworked and emaciated. Such veterans of the war are cared for at the Ada Cole Memorial Stables at South Mimms in Hertfordshire, where this photograph of Old Bill was taken. Below, fine war horses of the B.E.F. are seen watering in France in 1914.

wears the Order of the Blue Cross, and the 1916–18 Victory and General Service medals. He has collected in his nosebag on behalf of the Royal Veterinary College about £275, and has the honour of a loose box in the college dedicated to his name. Quicksilver, who is twenty-eight, is reported by his master to be very well. "I still hack him," writes Sir Percy, "and he was out with the hounds last Boxing Day."

At the Ada Cole Memorial Stables at South Mimms, Herts, there are always a number of old war horses in residence. Our illustrations show Old Bill and other war veterans.

In the grounds of a beautiful old château in Belgium there are grazing to-day nine or ten old British war horses who have been rescued by Our Dumb Friends' League from a life of toil. These are horses that were sold into Belgian ownership after the war. Now, as the guests of the aged Duchesse de Troy, they are assured for life of rich pasturage and comfortable stables. It is now officially stated that all surviving war horses in Belgium and France that can be repatriated have been brought back to their home country as old-age pensioners of the paddock.

Imperial War Museum



The UNSEEN KILLERS at LE CATEAU

by Pte. R. G. Hill

PRIVATE R. G. HILL went to France on August 22, 1914, with the 1st R. Warwickshire Regt. Except for a few days in hospital in 1915 he served in this battalion until April 1, 1917 when he was wounded and discharged medically unfit in March 1918. His story of the wild fighting at Le Cateau and of the nightmare of marching in retreat creates again the epic of the 'contemptible' infantrymen of 1914

WE detrained just outside Le Cateau station. The town was in confusion, as Mons had just been fought; refugees, troops, and ammunition columns creating a dust that choked us. Civilians offered us jugs of weak beer, but discipline was so strong that to accept it meant a court martial.

We marched out of the town along a typical French road. Just when we were about all in, a halt was called for dinner, which we never had as an outburst of artillery fire was heard. It must have been miles away, but we had orders to open out to artillery formation and proceed. We saw no enemy that day, and at night bivouacked in a cornfield, where we enjoyed a long-delayed dinner. We marched off in column of fours next morning at dawn in a new direction. At noon we halted, piled arms, and rations were issued—the last for many days. Men were told off to dig trenches on rising ground to our left.

Whilst so engaged an aeroplane hovered over us. It had no distinguishing mark, and we thought it was French, but were soon disillusioned, as it scattered coloured lights over us. Too late, we opened fire. Soon large black shells were bursting in the beet field just in front of our improvised position.



HERE THE THUNDER OF GERMAN GUNS WAS HEARD

A consolation for the people of France and Belgium whose towns and villages were taken by the Germans in their first advance, and who endured four years of bondage, was that when victory came their homes were intact. The Grand' Place, Le Cateau, seen above, is practically the same as it was when the thunder of German guns was heard there in 1914. Below is one of the sidings at Le Cateau where Private Hill's battalion detrained.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



Rain then started, the shelling ceased, and a regiment of our cavalry came galloping up and jumped over us in our hastily constructed trench. We stayed there till nightfall, incidentally wiping out a small Uhlan patrol that blundered upon us. When we withdrew we could hear the jingle of accoutrements of many men approaching. That night we seemed to march round and round a burning farmhouse.

DAY broke, and we were still dragging our weary limbs along in what seemed to us to be an everlasting circle. At last the word came to halt and fall out for a couple of hours' rest. We had been marching along a road with a high ridge on the right and cornfields on the left. High up the ridge ran a road parallel to ours, on which one of our regiments had been keeping pace with us. We had no sooner sunk down in the cornfield on our left than shrapnel began to burst over us. Our officers were fine leaders. "Man the ditch on the road," came the order.

In the meantime the battalion on the ridge had been caught napping by a squadron of Uhlans, who charged them



OVER THIS ROAD MANY MARCHED OUT BUT FEW CAME BACK

Along this road the battalion in which Private Hill served marched from Le Cateau for that terrible encounter with the Germans that he describes in this chapter. Only half the men who had met the enemy came back, and over the road along which they had marched a few hours earlier, full of high hopes and courage, they returned, wounded, footsore, but undaunted.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

while they were falling out for a rest. Our eager young officers went frantic with excitement. On their own initiative they led us up the hill to the rescue of our comrades. With wild shouts we dashed up. At first the ground was broken and afforded cover for our short sharp dashes. We then came to a hedge with a gap about four yards wide.

A dozen youngsters made for the gap, unheeding the advice of older soldiers to break through the hedge. Soon that gap was a heap of dead and dying as a machine-gun was trained on it.

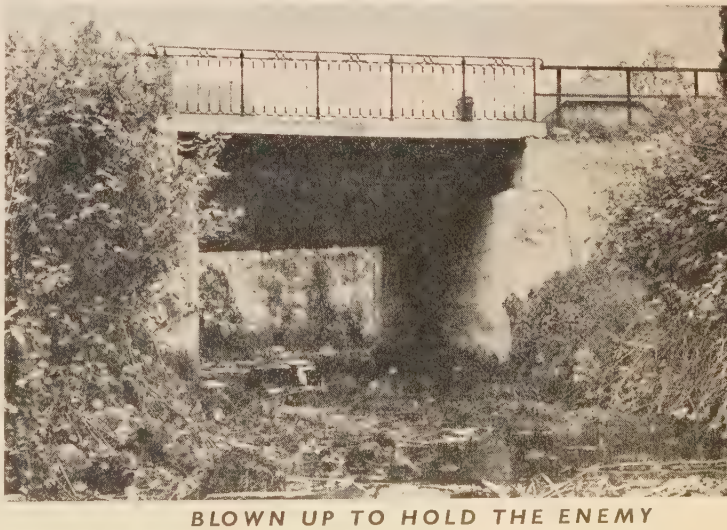
We reached an open field, where we were met with a hail of shrapnel. Officers were picked off by snipers. A subaltern rallied us and gave the order to fix bayonets. A piece of shrapnel carried half his jaw away. Upwards we went, but not a sign of a German. They had hidden themselves and waited for our mad rush. Officers and sergeants being wiped out, and, not knowing where the enemy really were, our attack fizzled out. A staff officer came galloping amongst us, mounted on a big black charger. He bore a charmed life. He shouted something unintelligible, which someone said was the order to retire.

THE survivors walked slowly down, puzzled and baffled. They had attained nothing, and had not even seen the men they set out to help. We lost half the battalion in that wild attack.

Then came our turn to do something better. The survivors, under the direction of a capable major, dug in and waited to get their own back. A battery of eighteen-pounders started to shell the ridge. Suddenly shells started falling round the guns. One direct hit, and a gunner's leg fell amongst us. The battery was wiped out. Tired and worn out, we waited. Towards afternoon shrapnel played on us, fortunately without serious result. Then it was our turn to laugh. German infantry were advancing in close formation. They broke at our first volley. Something seemed to sting my leg. I found a shrapnel bullet had ploughed a shallow groove down the fleshy part of my thigh. The enemy advanced. Another volley, and they broke again. My leg began to pain me, so I hobbled along the road to a house which was being used as a dressing station. A long queue of wounded men were waiting to be dressed, while a crowd of thirst-maddened unwounded were crowding round a well in the garden. Despairing of medical aid I begged a field dressing, and, catching sight of a sunken road, there dressed my wound.

In this sunken road I found battalion headquarters. At dusk they retired, I with them. I learnt afterwards that all our wounded were captured that night, and small bodies of our troops, trying to retire in the darkness, had fired on each other. This was our part in the Battle of Le Cateau.

Then began the retreat. I must have fainted, for I remember hobbling along with some chums, and next I found myself tied to the seat of an ammunition limber. We came to a village jammed with retiring troops, where an artillery officer bundled me off. Fortunately some of my own regiment passed, and, seeing me lying in the road, helped me along. My leg seemed easier and I was able to proceed at the pace my footsore companions were going. It was nightmare marching. Our party was now about 150 strong. Sleep was out of the question, and food was begged from villagers. Reaching St. Quentin, we had great hopes of rest, but were told that we were surrounded. We lay down to die through sheer weariness, but a staff officer rounded us up, and got us out just as the enemy entered. Tramp, tramp, again. Engineers told us to hurry over the bridge at Ham, as they were just about to blow it up. A little scrap a bit farther on, then Noyon, where we snatched a night's sleep.



BLOWN UP TO HOLD THE ENEMY

The battalion had covered about 30 miles of road from Le Cateau, marching for many weary and sleepless hours, before it reached the point shown in the photograph—the bridge at Ham. It was at this spot that Private Hill and his comrades were told to hurry.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



PRIVATE FRANK RICHARDS

In 1901, Private Frank Richards joined the Royal Welch Fusiliers He had served for eight years with the colours, and had been a reservist for five years, when the Great War broke out and he was recalled to the colours.

STRAGGLERS OF '14 —LOST for a WEEK!

by Pte. Frank Richards, D.C.M., M.M.

PRIVATE FRANK RICHARDS, D.C.M., M.M., author of a famous war book, 'Old Soldiers Never Die,' went to France with his battalion, the 2nd Royal Welch Fusiliers, in 1914. (He saw continuous active service until 1918.) He describes with unfailing geniality the impressions of an 'Old Contemptible' in the historic retreat from Mons

At dawn we marched out of Le Cateau with fixed bayonets. Duffy said: "We'll have a bang at the bastards today." We all hoped the same. We were all fed up with the marching and would have welcomed a scrap to relieve the monotony. But we were more fed up before the day was over. The Second Argyll's, who went to the assistance of the East Yorks, lost half of their battalion during the day, but we simply marched and counter-marched during the whole time that this was going on.

We kept on meeting people who had left their homes and were making their way south with the few belongings they could carry. One little lad, about twelve years of age, was wheeling his old grandmother in a wheelbarrow. They all seemed to be terror-stricken. In every village we marched through the church had been converted into a field-hospital and was generally full of our wounded. At about twilight we lined up in a sunken road. I was the extreme left-hand man of the battalion, Billy and Stevens being on my right.

Our colonel was speaking to our company commander just behind us when up the road came a man wheeling a pram with a baby in it and two women walking alongside. They stopped close by me, and the man, speaking in English, told me that the two women were his wife and mother-in-law, and that his only child was in the pram. He was an Englishman, the manager of some works in a small town, but his wife was French. They had been travelling all day. If they had delayed another hour they would have been in the enemy's hands.

Just at this moment a staff-officer came along and informed our colonel that all our cavalry patrols were in, and that any cavalry or troops who now appeared on our front would be the enemy. He had hardly finished speaking when over a ridge in front of us appeared a body of horsemen galloping towards us. We immediately got out of the sunken road, and standing up opened out with rapid fire at six hundred yards. I had only fired two rounds when a bugle blew the cease-fire. This, I may say, was the only time during the whole of the war, with the exception of the German bugle at Bois Grenier, that I heard a bugle in action. The light was very bad, and the majority of the bullets had been falling short because we couldn't clearly see the sights of our rifles, but several horses fell. The horsemen stopped and waved their arms. We had been firing on our own cavalry who, I was told later, belonged to the 19th Hussars. I never heard whether any of them had been killed.

MARCH! MARCH! HOUR BY HOUR!

When we got back down in the sunken road the women were crying and the child was bawling, but the man seemed to have vanished. Stevens said: "Where has he got to?" I asked the women, but couldn't get a word out of them, only crying, when out from under the cover of the pram crawled the man. He commenced to storm and rave and wanted to know what we meant by all that firing which had terrified his wife and child. (He didn't say a word about his mother-in-law.) He said that he would report us. Billy got hold of him and said: "Call yourself an Englishman! What the hell do you reckon you were going to do under that pram? For two pins I'd bayonet you, you bloody swine!"

"Fall in!" came the order, and we were on the march again. It was now dusk, and I expect that family fell into the hands of the enemy during the night.

We retired all night with fixed bayonets, many sleeping as they were marching along. If any angels were seen on the Retirement, as the newspaper accounts said they were, they were seen that night. March, march, for hour after hour, with no halt: we were now breaking into the fifth day of continuous marching with practically no sleep in between. We were carrying our rifles all shapes and it was only by luck that many a man didn't receive a severe bayonet wound during the night. Stevens said: "There's a fine castle there, see?" pointing to one side of the road. But there was nothing there. Very nearly everyone was seeing things, we were all so dead-beat.

At last we were halted and told that we would rest for a couple of hours. Outposts and sentries were posted, and we sank down just off the road and were soon fast asleep. Fifteen minutes later we were woke up, and on the march again. We had great difficulty in waking some of the men. About ten yards from the side of the road was a straw rick, and about half a dozen men had got down the other side of it. I slipped over and woke them up. One man we had a job with, but we got him going at last. By this time the company had moved off, so we were stragglers. We came to some cross-roads and didn't know which way to go. Somehow we decided to take the road to the right.

Dawn was now breaking. Along the road we took were broken-down motor lorries, motor cycles, dead horses and broken wagons. In a field were dumped a lot of rations. We had a feed, crammed some biscuits into our haversacks and moved along again. After a few minutes, by picking up more stragglers, we were twenty strong, men of several different battalions. I enquired if anyone had seen the 2nd Royal Welch Fusiliers, but nobody had. By the time that it was full daylight there were thirty-five of us marching along, including two sergeants. We got into a small village—I had long since lost interest in the names of the places

we came to, so I don't know where it was—where we met a staff-officer who took charge of us. He marched us out of the village and up a hill and told us to extend ourselves in skirmishing order at two paces interval and lie down, and be prepared to stop an attack at any moment. About five hundred yards in front of us was a wood, and the attack would come from that direction. The enemy commenced shelling our position, but the shells were falling about fifteen yards short.

The man on my left was sleeping; he was so dead-beat that the shelling didn't worry him in the least, and the majority of us were not much better. We lay there for about half an hour, but saw no signs of the enemy. The staff-officer then lined us up and told us to attach ourselves to the first battalion we came across. I had to shake and thump the man on my left before I could wake him up. We marched off again and came across lots of people who had left their homes. Four ladies in an open carriage insisted on getting out to let some of our crippled and dead-beat men have a ride. We packed



ON THE GREAT RETREAT

British cavalry (right) are seen on the weary road from Mons, yet not too exhausted to spare their even more weary horses. Only a few days before they had advanced spick and span as the lower photograph shows.

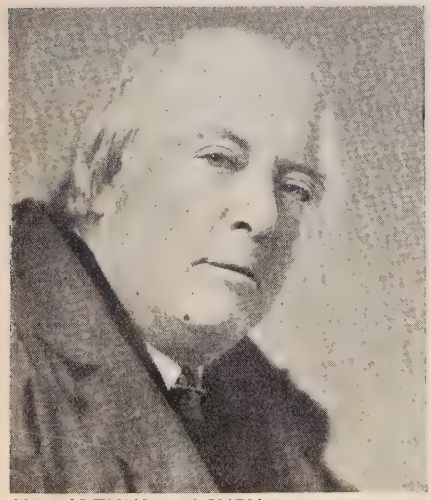
Imperial War Museum



as many as we could into the carriage and moved along, the ladies marching with us. Late in the afternoon we took leave of the ladies. The men who had been riding had a good day's rest and sleep. If the ladies had all our wishes they would be riding in a Rolls-Royce for the rest of their lives.

During the evening, when passing through a village, I got news that the battalion had passed through it an hour before. I and a man named Rhodes decided to leave the band and try to catch them. During the next few days we attached ourselves to three different battalions, but immediately left them when we got news of our own. We wandered on for days, living on anything we could scrounge. It seemed to us that trying to find the battalion was like trying to chase a will-o'-the-wisp. But we were going the right way. All roads seemed to lead to Paris. One day, when we were on our own, not attached to any unit, Rhodes and I came across a band of gypsies in a wood and made them understand that we were very hungry. They invited us to the meal they were about to have, and I think we surprised them by our eating abilities. We thanked them heartily, and with bellies like poisoned pups staggered along again. It was the first square meal we had had since we left Amiens.

The following day we came to a railhead. A train was in and an officer inquired if we had lost our unit. We said that we had, so he ordered us to get into the train which was full of troops who were in the same fix as ourselves.



MR. ARTHUR MACHEN
A brilliant writer of books and newspaper articles, Mr. Arthur Machen was for many years an outstanding figure in Fleet Street. In this photograph he is seen as he is today.
Elliott & Fry

★ 21 August—September, 1914

The TRUE STORY of 'THE ANGELS OF MONS'

by Arthur Machen

IN the early days of September 1914 the whole English-speaking world was thrilled by the publication of an imaginative elegy by that celebrated author, Arthur Machen, entitled 'The Bowmen.' In it he described how the exhausted troops at Mons were inspired by the apparition of angels in the sky. For years afterwards the eager enquiry was made, 'Could this be true?' We are able to reveal in the author's own words that this beautiful idea was a projection of his own fancy

IT is my belief that in 1914 we in England had been living on Trafalgar and Waterloo for a hundred years. There was certainly a shock, and a severe shock, in the winter of 1899-1900: the Boers came as an unpleasant surprise to us. But Mafeking, when London went crazy from Friday night to Sunday morning, pretty well wiped all those doubts and fears away. "After all," we said, in our easy-going, pleasant manner, "this is only a dress rehearsal for Armageddon"—and were sure, in the actor's phrase, that it would be "all right on the night."

Not for a moment would I say that we were a blusterous and a boastful nation. I don't think we rammed Trafalgar and Waterloo down other nations' throats. We didn't often mention them—except to 'bus conductors and hansom-cab drivers. And as to mentioning Armageddon—a habit we had caught, I think, from the foreign correspondents of the newspapers—we had pretty well made up our minds that we would take care to be out of it, and to keep out of it. And, in the meantime, we had a quiet confidence in our might.

And so, when the incredible happened, and the thunderbolt of the war fell on us out of the blue sky, we were still quietly confident. The battle, we heard, was to begin on Belgian fields. Waterloo was in Belgium.

"All right on the night." I looked out of my window one Sunday morning towards the end of the August of 1914—and saw some newspaper bills in front of the little shop over the way, and saw that the night had come.

IT was not at all "the night" in the sense of the easy optimists. Nothing could be less like Waterloo. I have forgotten the detail of the newspaper account of that Sunday morning; but I remember it was a tale to make the heart sink, almost to deep despair. It told of the British Army in full retreat, nay, in headlong, desperate retreat, on Paris; nay, it told of no regular, ordered tactical movement, of no considered measure to fall back on firmer ground, that the battle might be renewed and changed to victory. The correspondent of the newspaper rather pictured an army broken to fragments and the fragments scattered abroad in confusion. It was hardly an army any more; it was a mob of shattered men.

It was said afterwards that the journalist had exaggerated what he saw, or rather, perhaps, had drawn exaggerated and erroneous conclusions from what he saw. I do not know about that; I leave the truth of the matter to the military historians. But I know what we read, and how we were sick at heart. And I suppose that in the first place it was to comfort myself that I thought of the story of "The Bowmen," and wrote it in the early days of September. And perhaps I had better go into the box for the last time and swear once more that the tale is mere and sheer invention; that I made it all up out of my own head, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is entirely without any foundation.

'THE BOWMEN OF ENGLAND'

IT was published in "The Evening News"—I think, on September 29. On this day is held the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, and the date seems to have had its influence on the fortunes of the story. My tale concerned the spirits of the great English bowmen of the old wars, summoned from their rest by St. George's mighty command: "Array, array, array!" But when people began to talk about it, they called these good bowmen "The Angels of Mons."

Some people may remember that England had an earlier source of comfort and consolation. I should say assurance, for I think it was almost in the first days of the war, some weeks before the Retreat from Mons, that everybody was talking of "the Russians." "Three hundred thousand



VISION OF THE ANGELS OF MONS AS A MONS ARTIST IMAGINES IT

In the Mons Museum is this remarkable painting of the Angels of Mons, the true story of which Mr. Arthur Machen tells in this chapter. The picture is the work of M. Marcel Gillis, a talented local artist and it gives a modernistic impression of the vision. The background shows the town of Mons from the south, while above the artist has depicted the angels and bowmen of the legend. In the bottom left-hand corner are the words which form part of the legend : " The Angels of Mons : the Germans suddenly stopped and galloped away at top speed."

Rooshians," as Jos Sedley assured his sister, Amelia, were coming to our assistance. Their trains had been observed passing, with drawn blinds, through Ealing, Moreton-on-the-Marsh, Rugby Junction—through any station and every station. There were myriads on myriads of them—and your friends got extremely cross if you hinted a doubt. And this is still a matter for curiosity ; nobody knows the origin of this magnificent fable. Here, again, there was no trace of a *fundamentum in re*, or, in plain English, not a word of truth in the story ; but here the name of the sacred bard, or liar, is unknown.

But the Russian hosts faded gently away, and the British Army was left to fight its own battles at Ypres and elsewhere. And the Bowmen, who had turned into Angels, took the place of the forces of the Czar. Great numbers of people made up their minds that the story was true from beginning to end.

And, I must say, the evidence in favour of this view was very strong. A Lady in Waiting at Court assured the world that she had read it all in a letter from a soldier at the Front, just as it was in the paper, but some time before it appeared in the paper. Another lady, unconnected with the Court, had talked to a wounded soldier, who had seen St. George on horseback, waving his sword, as if he were saying : " Come on, boys ! We'll give them the kibosh ! " This worthy fellow was indignant at the notion that he wouldn't know St. George if he saw him. " Haven't I seen him on every quid I've had in my life ? " he asked.

Then there were all sorts of confirmatory allegations, quotations, asseverations and citations ; many anecdotes, and the story of Elisha. Many of these matters were attested and confirmed by " A Nurse," " Miss M.," " A Doctor," " A Clergyman," and a host of such nameless witnesses.

It was strong evidence, as I say. Or, rather, it would have been strong evidence but for one circumstance—there was not one word of truth in it. Or, in the stronger phrase of Wemmick, these stories were lies : " Every one of 'em lies, sir."

LAUGHING DAWN of DESPAIR

by Frederic Coleman

MR. COLEMAN, a pioneer motorist, was one of the members of the R.A.C. who volunteered their services and their cars at the outbreak of war. Constantly on the move in the battle area, Mr. Coleman had a close-up view of much of the fighting. His amusing account of the retreat through St. Quentin on the morning of August 27 differs considerably from the unhappy picture that Col. Osburn draws in the succeeding section of the later hours of this fatal day



AN AMERICAN AT MONS

Though an American citizen, Mr. Coleman was one of the first to offer his services to the War Office on the outbreak of war. His skill as a driver was of the utmost value during the days of the Retreat.

THE morning of Thursday, August 27 found us in the direct path of what in the early hours of the day we believed to be but the remnant of the shattered Left of the British Army. Like the dawn of the day before, the morning broke clear and warm, promising a hot summer day. The perfect mornings on the retreat were some compensation for our short hours of rest.

St. Quentin on Thursday, August 27 saw rare scenes and strange sights.

An orderly, well-disciplined army had been through a great fight. Its infantry, unbeaten by the infantry that opposed it, had been ordered to retire. "Gawd knows why," hundreds of Tommies were saying. The vastness of the scale of operations, the uncertainty of the General Staff itself as to just what was happening in some quarters of the field, and the universal ignorance of the rank and file as to what had happened elsewhere than in their own immediate vicinity, all tended to discouragement.

After inflicting such terrible losses as the German foot soldiers suffered at Cambrai–Le Cateau, the British Army had taken a hammering which seemed to many of them totally unnecessary.

To fight stubbornly and victoriously against an advancing enemy, hurling back his masses as fast as they are poured forward, is soul-inspiring. To leave such occupation for a scamper over a shell-swept field, comrades falling to right and left as they run, is not. Units that had just proven to themselves their invincibility were smashed and disintegrated in the very obeying of an unwelcome order to retire.

Jumbled together, inextricably mixed, every group convinced that their little remnant contained the only survivors of their individual command, confusion worse confounded was only to be expected.

The work of sorting out the men from the steady flowing stream of humanity as it moved southward, of re-forming an army that had lost most semblance of form, was the task set before the British officers in St. Quentin that morning at sun-up. It did not take them long to set about it. Stationed here and there along the main route through the town, each officer of staff became an usher, urbanely advising each little knot of stragglers where to proceed to find the nucleus of their particular unit, and obtain food, drink, and news of their comrades.

The wounded were in considerable numbers. Ambulances drew up at the railway station and unloaded. A couple of sweet little old French ladies bustled about on one side of the station square, giving out tea as fast as they could make it.

I HAD TO CHEER THEM UP

MOVING about St. Quentin in a motor-car that morning was slow work, as the roads were full to overflowing. Not far from the Mairie a wounded officer, his vitality all but spent, was placed in my car. I took him as quickly as possible to the station. Badly wounded in the chest, he said with a pale smile, "I've been about a hundred miles, it seems, since I was hit, and in pretty well every sort of conveyance except a motor-car. Two miles on a limber nearly finished me."

He looked, poor chap, as though he had reached care and attention none too soon.

For a time I was to act as usher at a point a bit north of St. Quentin. Placed on the road by a staff officer, and told where the men of the various units were to be directed, I chose to stand by a French lady, who, with her daughters, was supplying coffee, steaming hot, to the passing Tommies.

Never shall I forget that staff officer's parting instructions. "Cheer them up as you keep them on the move," he said. "They are very downhearted. Tell them anything, but cheer them up. They've got their tails down a bit, but they are really all right. No wonder they are tired! Worn out to begin with, then fighting all day, only to come back all night—no rest, no food, no sleep—poor devils! Yes, they are very downhearted. Tell 'em where to go, and cheer 'em up—cheer 'em up."

OF all the jobs that have ever fallen to my lot, I thought, this promises to be one of the most hopeless. Cheer them up, indeed! A fine atmosphere this, for cheer. Ragged and muddy and foot-sore they looked, straggling along.

The first individual who caught my attention particularly was a tall captain, an old acquaintance. He showed me his service cap, through the crown of which two neat bullet-holes had been drilled. Both of the vicious little pellets had missed their intended mark, though one had ploughed a slight furrow along his scalp, leaving an angry red welt.

No one had examined his head to find what damage had been caused, and he asked me to investigate. He bent over, and I poked my finger here and there, asking "where it hurt" and how much —in short, doing the best I could to accommodate his thirst for information.

AS I was intent on my amateur probing, a voice from behind commented, "A close shave the little divil made that toime, shure." Turning at the soft brogue, what was my surprise to see a Jock, in a kilt that looked as if its wearer had been rolled in the mud. Capless, his shock of red hair stood on end, and a pair of blue Irish eyes twinkled merrily. I was genuinely surprised. It

was before I had learned that an Irishman in a Scotch regiment is no *rara avis* —nor a Cockney in a battalion dubbed Irish on the rolls, for the matter of that.

As if entering himself in a competition of close shaves, the Irishman held his right ear between thumb and finger. "And what do ye think o' that?" he queried.

Right through the lobe of his ear, close to his cheek, a Mauser bullet had drilled a clean hole. "Close that, I'm thinkin'," said the proud owner of the damaged member, "and I niver knew how close me ear was to me head till that thing come along."

A burst of laughter from the group that had gathered was infectious. The boys trailed off together, chatting over further stories of close shaves, leaving me thankful the Irish lad had come by, cheered *that* lot up, and so saved me the task.

THE next group to reach me contained a sergeant and a dozen or so Tommies, of most disreputable exterior.

"To what lot do you belong, sergeant?" I asked.

"We're Riles, sir," said the sergeant.

"You're what?"

"*Riles!*" with decided emphasis.

With a spasm, I remembered that the Royal Fusiliers were in the 9th Brigade of the 3rd Division, and directed the group accordingly.

"You oughter know who *we* are," said the sergeant, somewhat haughtily. "We're the lot what was first in Mons and last out, *we* are."

"That's right," piped up a squeaky voice that came from a diminutive member of the squad; "buck, you beggar, buck. Tell 'em the tale."

A grin on half a dozen faces told that the small one might be expected to produce some comment when occasion permitted. The sergeant turned:

"What's ailin' *you*, Shorty?" he demanded.

"Tell 'em the tale," croaked the little man. "Fust in Mons and last out. In at three miles an hour and out at eighteen. That's us, you bet," and he



WHERE COCKNEY HUMOUR SAVED THE DAY

The 14th century Hôtel de Ville of St. Quentin looks down today on a very different scene from that which was enacted in the Grand' Place on August 27, 1914. On that day the British Expeditionary Force was in full retreat from Mons, and through the town came weary, exhausted soldiers of many units, some separated from their comrades, and others almost the only survivors of their battalions. It was here, in the Grand' Place, that the scenes, some moving, some humorous, described by Mr. Coleman, took place

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

snorted as the squad roared in appreciative mirth.

So they drifted on, anything but downhearted, if one could judge from the running fire of banter between Shorty and his sergeant, which kept their comrades in continual chuckles as they toiled on.

Truly I thanked Shorty for his assistance in the "cheer-'em-up" department.

Detachments went past at times in step, whistling or singing. Some were obviously too footsore to walk normally, but they heroically tried to keep pace with the rest, and made a brave show of it.

One big, lantern-jawed chap, as he caught sight of me, insisted on his score of companions forming single file. They brought rifles to shoulder and stepped out in style with an indescribable swagger. The Sphinx would have broken into a smile at the sight of them. As the leader, much begrimed, came up I explained that hot coffee was to be had from jugs held by three little pig-tailed French schoolgirls under a tree hard by.

'PROPER REARGUARDS, WE ARE!'

As the boys drank, the leading spirit chatted. I gathered from casual remarks, if they were to be believed, that talking was a habit with him. In fact, remarks were proffered, *sotto voce*, that he had not ceased talking, except to sleep, since leaving England. The comments of his soiled band seemed meat and drink to his soul. He fairly revelled in them.

"Pals we are, all right," he said with a grin, "though no one would think it to hear 'em, would they? Know how to fight, they do, but can't talk—that's their drawback. Don't know no words."

A hot strong draught of good black French coffee gave him pause, but a moment later he was at it again. I told him where to go. As he tramped off he said, "Come on, you blighters! Don't block the road. You ain't no bloomin' army now. You're a forlorn 'ope, that's what you are. Nice-lookin' lot o' beggars. 'Op it!" And they "'opped it" to the music of his cheery abuse. God bless him!

Not long after, a very woebegone procession hove in sight. But few were in that squad, and they seemed very worn and tired. Red-eyed from lack of sleep, barren of equipment, many a cap missing, and not a pair of sound feet in the lot. Every man had his rifle, but they looked very "done."

"Here are the pessimists at last," thought I. "It will take something to cheer *this* bunch."

I discovered their regiment and informed them of the whereabouts of their fellows.

"Yes," said I, "three streets on after you get to the fountain, then to the right, and there you'll see a big building on the left—that's the one."

"We've been rearguardin'," said a cadaverous corporal who acted as spokesman. "We're proper rearguards, we are. Been doin' nothin' else but rearguardin'."

"Right," said I. "Don't forget. Third turnin' after the fountain. Plenty of food there."

"Rearguards, we are," from the lugubrious one. "Proper rearguards. Ain't done nothing else for three days."

"Cheerio!" I insisted; "three streets on after the fountain, and then——"

"*Proper* rearguards——" he started again.

"But," I interrupted in turn, "I'm telling you where there's *food*, my boy."

"And *I'm* telling you, sir, if you'll not mind," he continued gravely, "that we're *proper* rearguards, we are. And we *'ave* learned one thing about *proper* rearguards in this 'ere war right off, and that is that rearguards ain't expected to eat. So we 'ave give it up, we 'ave. It's a bad 'abit, any'ow. Ain't it, boys?"

Off they trudged, grinning. The funereal visage of the spokesman turned and indulged in a sombre wink, whereat they laughed to a man, and I with them.

"Proper rearguards *don't* eat." He had had his joke, and played it out to his heart's content.

Ah, well, it was an experience!

I had not been long on that roadside when I realized that many of us had been labouring under a great delusion. It was not that someone was needed to cheer up the Tommy; it was that most of us needed the Tommy to cheer *us* up.

The indomitable pluck of the soldier in the ranks and his effervescent cheeriness was to save that retreating army of Smith-Dorrien's as no staff work could have saved it had the Tommy not possessed those characteristics to such remarkable degree.

Many an officer whose hair had grown grey in the Service said that day that Tommy was of finer metal than he had ever dreamed it possible of any soldier. The very air was full of unostentatious heroism.

One grizzled brigadier, seated on his horse, watched that straggling army pass, tears dropping now and then unheeded on his tunic, his lips pressed hard. One of his staff heard the old warrior mutter, as one detachment passed, soiled, but with bold eye and shoulders well back: "Ah! they may be able to *kill* such men, but they will never be able to *beat* them."

I began to look at the men with new eyes as the morning passed. If the thousands struggling by but continued to come, I thought, many more must have been saved than any of us imagined. Beneath the grime and dirt and weariness I saw clear eyes and firm jaws, even when men were almost too worn out to walk further. Those who appeared to be positively unable to go on were stopped at the St. Quentin station, to be sent south by rail.

I realized that in front of me was passing a pageant such as men had rarely seen in the ages. It was a pageant of the indomitable will and unconquerable power of the Anglo-Saxon.

Early in the day I was relieved and sent back to the station. Horse wagons full of wounded jostled the ambulances in the station yard. Even the motor transport lorries, as they rolled past, paused to drop off their quota of maimed and bandaged men in khaki.

One young subaltern passed, sound asleep in his saddle and unmindful of all about him, his horse following the human current.

At times a pitiable group of refugees went by, though for the most part the refugees had been crowded off the main roads by the retreating army, or diverted to other routes.

SMITH-DORRIEN'S WINNING SMILE

A sergeant of the East Surrey Regiment, of Fergusson's division, came up. His face was haggard. He reported that two hundred and fifty men, with five officers, were all that was left of that battalion.

Standing near the bridge, close by the station, I saw General Smith-Dorrien a few feet distant. He turned, and I caught his eye. He was speaking to a passing officer. I hardly remember his words. Something about plenty more of the same command being down the road a bit, I think. It was good to see Smith-Dorrien's face and hear his voice. I had heard much of him during those days, and never was he spoken of save in terms of affection. As he looked my way he smiled, with the sort of smile that everyone within range takes to himself as his own property. It was of inestimable value that morning in St. Quentin—Smith-Dorrien's smile. It put heart into many a man.



HAIG, MONRO AND GOUGH IN A WAYSIDE COUNCIL OF WAR

Anxious hours were spent by the Generals commanding the three Corps of the British Expeditionary Force during the retreat from Mons, but there was never a time when they did not know that every effort, every sacrifice that they called for from their men would be met with the traditional valour of the British Army. This scene, typical of the serenity which characterized the British high command, shows Sir Douglas Haig, commanding the 1st Corps, holding a war council in a village street. He is seen on the left in conversation with Major-General C. C. Monro, commanding the 1st Division, while on the right are two members of Sir Douglas's staff, Brigadier-General J. Gough and Colonel Percival.

Imperial War Museum



FALLING BACK IN GOOD ORDER TO THE SKIRL OF THEIR NATIVE PIPES

Though the British Expeditionary Force was often hard pressed during the retreat from Mons, it never made anything but an orderly retirement, protected by many gallant rearguard actions. The photograph shows a scene in a French village during the Retreat. Over the cobble-paved streets a Scottish regiment is marching south in good order, and that the men are not downhearted is proved by the fact that the sound of the pipes cheers them on their way. Not the least heroic of the Highlanders were the pipers, who, dead-beat though they were, still found breath for the pipes

Imperial War Museum



FIRST LONG SLEEP FOR THIRTEEN DAYS

During the thirteen days which the retreat from Mons lasted, the infantry had about 4 hours' rest in 24 and the cavalry about 3, but when the retreat was over the cavalry had the luxury of a whole day's rest at Gournay near Paris. The 11th Hussars are here seen bivouacked in the grounds of Madame Townshend's château at Champs. The photograph shows Lieutenant Arkwright (who was killed flying later in the R.F.C.) making a hasty toilet. Photographs of the same regiment on their way to Mons appear in pp. 26 and 34.

Imperial War Museum



HERE LIES A HIGHLANDER: 'A GREAT PAL'

Central News

This remarkable photograph of the grave of a private in a Highland regiment is a moving example of the wonderful spirit of camaraderie that made the British Expeditionary Force that great band of brothers in arms which it was from 1914 to 1918. The cross was made from strips of wood torn from an ammunition box. On it are roughly scrawled the name, number and regiment of the dead soldier, and his comrades' touching tribute to him: "He was a great pal." His coat, torn by shell-fire, drapes the cross, and flowers such as might have decorated his grave at home have been placed there by his comrades.

EPIC STORY of St. QUENTIN

How Tom Bridges Saved Two Regiments

by Lt.-Col. Osburn, D.S.O.

DURING the retirement the spirits of the troops flagged under retreat and exhaustion. Colonel Osburn's narrative shows how wholesale surrender at St. Quentin was averted by firm action on the part of a gallant cavalry officer, Major Tom Bridges, who himself adds fresh light to the story in pages 99–100

As we turned into the Grand' Place at St. Quentin on that late August afternoon not a single German was to be seen. The whole square was thronged with British infantrymen standing in groups or wandering about in an aimless fashion, most of them without either packs or rifles. Scores had gone to sleep sitting on the pavement, their backs against the fronts of the shops. Many, exhausted, lay at full length on the pavement. Some few, obviously intoxicated, wandered about firing in the air at real or imaginary German aeroplanes. The great majority were not only without their arms but had apparently either lost or thrown away their belts, water bottles and other equipment.

There must have been several hundred men in the Square, and more in the side streets; yet apparently they were without officers—anyway, no officers were to be seen. On the road down to the station we found Major Tom Bridges with part of his squadron and a few Lancers, horse-gunners and other stragglers who had attached themselves to his command. We followed him down to the station.

Apparently some hours before our arrival the last train that was to leave St. Quentin—Pariswards—for several years, had steamed out, carrying with it most of the British General Staff. A mob of disorganized soldiery had collected at the station, and I was told some had booed and cheered ironically these senior Staff officers as the Staff train steamed out.

CERTAINLY many of these infantrymen appeared to be in a queer, rather truculent, mood. Bridges, who had sized up the situation, harangued this disorganized mob that only a few hours before had represented at least two famous regiments of the 4th Division.

Dismounted and standing far back in the crowd I could not hear what he said, but his words of encouragement and exhortation were received with sullen disapproval and murmurs by the bulk of those around him. One man shouted out: "Our old man (his Colonel) has surrendered to the Germans, and we'll stick to him. *We don't want any bloody cavalry interfering!*" and he pointed his rifle at Bridges.

I failed at first to understand how all these English soldiers could have surrendered to the Germans whom we had left several miles outside the city. But I was tired and hungry and I didn't much care what happened. Losing interest in what was taking place at the station I rode back up to the Grand' Place, hoping I should find some food and a sofa on which I could lie down. As I rode up from the station many of the men in the street stared at me disdainfully, their arms folded; scarcely one saluted—I was for them only "one of the bloody interfering cavalry officers." The events of the last three or four days had evidently diminished the prestige of the officer caste.

I began to wonder whether Bridges would be really shot if he continued his harangue at the railway station. In the Grand' Place I seemed to be the only officer . . . .

MISTAKEN HOSPITALITY

I TIED my horse to a lamp-post, intending to find a shop where I could buy some food and get permission to lie down. But nearly every shop was closed or else the door was blocked by an indignant proprietor and his wife who insisted, as I was an officer, that I should go in at once and clear out the English soldiery who had entered and were lying asleep in the bedrooms and passages, and in some cases had helped themselves to food.

"Your men are all drunk, will you order them out of the house? I have young daughters in my house—the men have entered my kitchen—it is disgraceful! Why is there no order? Why are there no officers? Your troops have been here for hours and up to no good; please order them to go away!"

"It is all your fault," I said angrily, "I have seen your people giving our tired men white wine to drink; and you know they can have had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours. Why on earth do you not give them all some bread and butter and make them some coffee?" They looked at me in amazement. French peasants will often give wine away—but who ever heard of a French shopkeeper giving away *butter!*

The townsfolk were exaggerating—only a few of the men were drunk. Certainly in nearly every house and shop I entered there were a few English soldiers. Even in a chemist's shop where I tried unsuccessfully—the proprietor was merely rude—to buy some soap, two British soldiers were lying fast asleep, not on, but underneath the couch in the chemist's back parlour.

But I saw few actually drunk. Eventually I got some bread and a bottle of white wine, and to avoid the recriminations of the shop people I decided I would sleep out in the Grand' Place as so many men were doing. The pavement looked hard and the cobblestones in the square too uneven. Eventually, for the first time in my life—may it be the last!—I decided to sleep in the paved gutter which looked dry and cleaner than the road. Rolling up my Burberry for a pillow, I lay down in the gutter close to my horse.

WHEN I awoke it was dusk, and two or three officers of the 4th Dragoon Guards were in the square with Bridges. Apparently, Bridges was having an interview with some official—I believe, the Mayor of St. Quentin—urging him to provide horses and carts to take those of our men who were too sore-footed to be able to march out of the town. I walked over to listen. As far as I could understand, the official—Mayor or whoever he was—was very indignant; he kept on saying:

"You understand, m'sieur le Majeur, it is now too late. These men have surrendered to the Germans!"

"How? The Germans are not here."

"Their colonel and officers have signed a paper giving me the numbers of the men of each regiment and the names of the officers who are prepared to surrender, and I have sent a copy of this out under a white flag to the commander of the approaching German army."

"But you have no business, m'sieur, as a loyal Frenchman, to assist allied troops to surrender."

"What else?" urged the Mayor. "Consider, m'sieur le Majeur, the



ON THE LINE OF THE GREAT RETREAT

North of St. Quentin lies this stretch of flat country, across which the British Army retreated into the town in August 1914, and from which the Germans entered it a few hours later. Here the incidents related by Sir Tom Bridges in page 99 occurred. Later this country was the scene of fierce fighting, and in the foreground, on the highest ground N. of the town, are the remains of a concrete "pill-box." In the centre background can be seen the magnificent church of St. Quentin, which was badly damaged by shell-fire, but is now completely restored.
Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

alternatives. The German army is at Gricourt? Very well; I, representing the inhabitants of St. Quentin, who do not want our beautiful town unnecessarily destroyed by shell-fire because it happens to be full of English troops, have said to your colonels and your men: 'Will you please go out and fight the German army *outside* St. Quentin?' But your men, they say, 'No; we cannot fight! We have lost nearly all our officers, our Staff have gone away by train, we do not know where to. Also, we have no artillery, most of us have neither rifles nor ammunition, and we are all so very tired!' Then, m'sieur le Majeur, I say to them, 'Then, please, if you will not fight, will you please *go right away*, and presently the Germans will enter St. Quentin peacefully; so the inhabitants will be glad to be tranquil and not killed, and all our good shops not burnt.' But they reply to me, 'No, we cannot go away! We are terribly, terribly tired. We have had no proper food or rest for many days, and yesterday we fought a great battle. We have not got any maps, and we do not even know where to go to. So we will stay in St. Quentin and have a little rest.' Then I say to them, 'Since you will neither fight nor go away, then please you must surrender.' So I send out a list of those who surrender to the German commander, and now all is properly arranged."

ARRANGED! Yet the logic of this argument was irresistible but for one point, which Bridges had quickly seized upon. The men *could* be got away if every horse and cart in St. Quentin was collected for those men too tired to march; his cavalrymen would escort them out of the town. So the shops and streets would be cleared of tired and drunken men, and there would be no more firing off of rifles. But there was to be no more of this wine, only tea or coffee and bread.

So eventually it was arranged. Bridges had saved the situation which, though bad, was understandable. Disorganized stragglers had arrived by the hundred, many out of sheer fatigue having thrown away their packs and rifles. They had tramped beneath the blazing August sun with empty stomachs, dispirited and utterly weary; many had received quantities of wine from friendly French peasants to revive them in those dusty lanes. Literally, in many cases their bellies were full of wine and their boots were half-full of blood; that I saw myself.

The English soldier's feet, like his head but unlike his heart, are not his strong point.

To me it seems there was every excuse for the two colonels and the one or two pale, exhausted-looking subalterns whom I had noticed mingling with the crowd down at the station. Without Staff, without maps or orders, without food, without ammunition, what *could* the remnants of broken infantry do before the advance of a victorious army whose cavalry could have mopped them up in an hour? Probably, looking back on it now, the two colonels did almost the only thing feasible and the brave

thing. Middle-aged men, both of them looked utterly exhausted. From their appearance they were suffering severely from the sun ; that alone might account for their not having thought of using the mayor as a collector of country carts.

So Bridges sent the remnant of his squadron round St. Quentin to encourage and collect in the square as many as possible of the infantrymen who were willing to join us in making our escape. The shots in different parts of the town still continued. Perhaps a few drunken soldiers were still having an imaginary wrestle with the " Angels of Mons," or something more repulsive ; white wine can raise many images. Or did some of Bridges' squadron shoot a few who too truculently scorned their suggestion that there was still time to run and fight another day ?

BRIDGES asked me to count the men who were collecting in the square and get them into fours. I counted one hundred and ten fours ; that is to say, four hundred and forty men. Then he asked me to do something else—I forget what it was. A few men had whistles and Jews' harps—perhaps they had them in their haversacks, as soldiers often do—and they formed a sort of band. We persuaded one of the colonels to march in front of his men. My recollection is that he looked very pale, entirely dazed, had no Sam Browne belt and leant heavily on his stick, apparently so exhausted with fatigue and the heat that he could scarcely have known what he was doing. Some of his men called to him encouraging words, affectionate and familiar, but not meant insolently, such as : " Buck up, sir ! Cheer up, daddy ! Now we shan't be long ! We are all going back to ' Hangle-Tear ' ! "

Actually I saw him saluting one of his own corporals, who did not even look surprised. What with fatigue, heat, drink and the demoralization of defeat, many hardly knew what they were doing. I was so tired myself that I went to sleep on my horse almost immediately after I remounted and nearly fell off, much to the amusement of some of the infantry, who supposed I was as drunk with white wine as some of their comrades.

By this time it was quite dark. It seemed to have taken hours to collect the men, yet we did not move off. I began to feel quite sick with impatience. Over-tired or sheer funk ? What on earth were the German cavalry doing ? At about five that afternoon they had been at Gricourt. We had held on there, keeping them back until about six o'clock, and it was now nearly eleven o'clock, and Gricourt was but a few

COBBLES OF ST. QUENTIN—ONCE THE BEDS OF BRITISH SOLDIERS

Here is the Grand' Place of St. Quentin as it is today. Its people sleep safely in their beds, and at night its cobbles echo only the footsteps of belated citizens. But these stones were the scene of moving events in August 1914. Upon them 4th Division men in retreat from Mons flung themselves down in a sleep of utter exhaustion, and were only roused by the heroic energy of Major Tom Bridges, who got them away in the nick of time.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



miles outside the town. Why had they not entered the town and mopped up this disorganized mob? Had they, informed by their aeroplanes of the situation, already encircled the town?

It was nearly half-past twelve before we left St. Quentin. The sultry August day had passed, to leave a thick summer mist. Our small army was at last collected. Every kind of vehicle had been filled with men with blistered feet. In front of them, on foot, were several hundred infantry, mostly of two regiments, but containing representatives of nearly every unit in the 4th Division, and behind, to form the rearguard to this extraordinary cavalcade, Tom Bridges' mounted column—the gallant little band of 4th Dragoon Guards, with driblets of Lancers, Hussars, Irish Horse, Signallers and the rest of the stragglers. In front of all rode a liaison officer and a guide sent by the Mayor, and, I think, Tom Bridges. By his side, walking, armed with a walking-stick, was one of the two colonels, a thick-set man, who had surrendered (the other had disappeared). And immediately behind them the miscellaneous "band" of Jews' harps and penny whistles.

So through the darkness and the thick, shrouding fog of that summer night we marched out, literally feeling our way through the countryside, so thick was the mist. At about two in the morning we had reached the villages of Savy and Roupy. Just as we started to leave St. Quentin I woke up to the fact that my precious map-case was missing, and I had to return to look for it in the now deserted Grand' Place. As for a moment I sat on my horse alone there, taking a last look round, I heard an ominous sound—the metallic rattle on the cobbles of cavalry entering the town through one of the darkened side streets that led into the Grand' Place.

The Germans must have entered St. Quentin but a few minutes after the tail of our queer little column disappeared westward through the fog towards Savy.



FRIENDS AND ENEMIES OF FRANCE PASSED THIS WAY

St. Quentin is a memorable name in the history of the Great War. Through the rue d'Isle, seen above, the British Expeditionary Force passed in August 1914, plodding onwards from north to south towards the railway station which lies at the foot of the hill. Nearly four years later large concentrations took place here before the great German offensive of March 1918. The photograph shows St. Quentin as it is today, a quiet town with all the war-time scars healed.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

TOY DRUM and TIN WHISTLE

by Lt.-Gen. Sir Tom Bridges, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.

To supplement Col. Osburn's story of the grave state of affairs in St. Quentin on Aug. 27, and the rallying of the troops by a brave and resourceful Major, we are privileged to publish that officer's personal account of an immortal incident of the Great War. Sir Tom Bridges retired in 1922



Russell, London

MAJOR AND DRUMMER TOO

This photograph shows Sir Tom Bridges in war time, when he rallied the dead-beat British soldiers at St. Quentin to the strains of "The British Grenadiers."

Approaching St. Quentin, the situation of the infantry became precarious. Marched literally off their feet, they straggled into the town in a demoralized condition. In the early afternoon our Brigadier had called the officers together and said we were in a very tight corner, but must fight it out and die like gentlemen. He appointed me rearguard commander with two squadrons and two companies of French Territorial infantry in support. My orders were to hold the Germans off and retire through St. Quentin at 6 p.m. (I was not actually clear of it until six hours later.) I made my dispositions and pushed out patrols to keep touch with the enemy. One of these, a corporal and three men, got cut off and joined a French cavalry regiment, but eventually found their way back to us a fortnight later.

The Germans were slow in coming on. During the afternoon a large grey car loaded with ladies came up on to a hill near by and had a good look round. The car was so like a Staff Benz that we thought the sex of the ladies doubtful. We sent a patrol to investigate, but it quickly turned and was gone. The Frenchmen were dug in on a rise north of the town, a nice position, with a clear field of fire. I arranged with the commandant that he should stay there till 4 p.m., but after visiting the outposts and returning about 2 p.m., there was not a pair of red trousers in sight anywhere. This was my first experience of Allied co-operation. The French, in spite of their gallantry and inherent military qualities, were often unreliable and unpunctual. It may be that their methods were different from ours. They came and went like autumn leaves. Where we would hold a position they would abandon it and retake it with a brilliant counter-attack, and *l'heure militaire*, inexorable for *le déjeuner*, seemed meaningless in operations. One had to remember that Marianne was a woman and would keep you guessing. Heroic in danger, she would run from a mouse. She would rise to the heights and descend to the depths. Like the prophet Habakkuk, she was *capable de tout*. Our interpreter officer, Harrison (4th Hussars), went into St. Quentin to find out if the infantry were clear, as, barring an occasional solitary lame duck, they seemed to have ceased coming down the Le Cateau road, a part of which we could see.

On his return he reported the place swarming with stragglers. He could find no officers, and the men were going into the houses and lying down to sleep. I then dispatched Sewell [Brigadier-General Sewell] with some hefty henchmen, farriers and the like, to clear out the houses and get everyone into the market place. He was also to find the Maire and commandeer bread and cheese and beer for our men, who were now on short commons, and to have it put down ready by portions on the pavement outside the Mairie, so that if we were pressed, as seemed quite possible, we should not have to waste time issuing rations.

We gradually fell back into the town, leaving two troops and machine-guns to hold the bridge over the river. There were two or three hundred men lying about in the Place and the few officers, try as they would, could not get a kick out of them. Worse, Harrison now reported that the remains of two battalions had piled arms in the railway station, and that their commanding officer had given a written assurance to the Maire that they would surrender and fight no more, in order to save the town from bombardment. I had to relieve the Maire of this document at once, and sent Harrison back to tell the two commanding officers that there was a cavalry rearguard still behind



LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR TOM BRIDGES

Above Sir Tom Bridges is seen as he is today. During the war he was wounded three times, he was mentioned in dispatches seven times, received the K.C.B. and K.C.M.G., and was promoted Major-General.



SUCH DRUMS SAVED THE STRAGGLERS OF ST. QUENTIN

Even today in the toy shops of St. Quentin souvenirs may be bought of that remarkable incident in the story of the war when Major Tom Bridges collected stragglers of two regiments, dead beat and downhearted, and led them forward on the weary retreat to the strains of "The British Grenadiers," played by himself on a toy drum and his trumpeter on a tin whistle. Here is a shop in St. Quentin, where drums such as Major Bridges beat are still bought by the boys of the town as prized toys.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

them, and they must hurry up and get out. Apparently a meeting was then held and the men refused to march on the ground that they had already surrendered and would only come away if a train was sent to take them. I therefore sent an ultimatum giving them half an hour's grace, during which time some carts would be provided for those who really could not walk, but letting them know that I would leave no British soldier alive in St. Quentin.

Upon this they left the station and gave no more trouble. I quote this unpleasant incident to show to what extremes good troops will be driven by fatigue. I conducted these negotiations through an intermediary, as I knew one of the colonels well and had met the other, and they were, of course, both senior to me.

THE men in the square were a different problem, and so jaded it was pathetic to see them. If one only had a band, I thought. Why not? There was a toy shop handy which provided my trumpeter and myself with a tin whistle and a drum, and we marched round and round the fountain where the men were lying like the dead, playing "The British Grenadiers" and "Tipperary," and beating the drum like mad. They sat up and began to laugh and even cheer. I stopped playing and made them a short exhortation and told them I was going to take them back to their regiments. They began to stand up and fall in, and eventually we moved slowly off into the night to the music of our improvised band, now reinforced with a couple of mouth-organs. When well clear of the town I tried to delegate my functions to someone else, but the infantry would not let me go. "Don't leave us, major," they cried, "or by God we'll not get anywhere." So on we went, and it was early morning before I got back to my squadron. Our rearguard was unmolested by the Germans, and it looked as if "more haste, less speed" might well have been the description of this part of the retreat.

Both the colonels above mentioned were afterwards court-martialled and cashiered. One of them, Elkington, joined the French Foreign Legion and worked his way to a commission. He was badly wounded and received the Legion of Honour. For his gallantry in the field the King reinstated him in the Army and awarded him the D.S.O.

SWORDS IN THE MOONLIGHT

THE night of the anniversary of Sedan found us riding through the Forest of Compiègne in the white moonlight with drawn swords, ready to fall upon our enemy, whom we were informed (quite inaccurately) had now surrounded us. There is no doubt, however, that the Germans were making strenuous efforts to round up the British. Hate was the motif of the hour.

The word "contemptible" tickled the queer sense of humour of the British soldier, and was a valuable slogan for the first seven divisions, and no doubt gave impetus to recruiting, but this translation of the word is hardly a fair one. "Insignificant" would probably meet the case.

ALTHOUGH we found a fleet of supply wagons in the wood with engines still running, and other queer things, including German soldiers in grey-green cut in half at the waist—I never knew how (was it an illusion caused by the ground mist or did I dream it, for I rode in a trance?)—we emerged into the open without further contact.

It was a relief to halt at last within the defences of Paris, for even the most unimaginative were by that time wondering when and where the chase would end. On the doctor's advice I got leave and borrowed a car to go into Paris and see a specialist about my face. Paris was a dead city, the shutters were up, the streets entrenched, and the Government gone to Bordeaux. The specialist had a German name. He rubbed his hands and beamed on me. Our army had had a bad time, yes? The Germans were supermen—Paris would now surrender to them? And so on. The battle of the Marne, already preparing, must have come as a shock to him. Time, he said, would heal my cheekbone.



GOOD FORTUNE OF WAR

An army must be fed while it fights and many of the men who minister to its needs never approach the front line. Above during the retreat from Mons, while the "foot sloggers" marched 20 hours a day in the great retreat, two privates of the Army Service Corps are lucky enough to be able to toast the "entente cordiale" in a café far from the front.



Equally happy is the A.S.C. man, right, enjoying a peaceful shave with plenty of hot water available. He is the driver of a British traction engine, and it is a remarkable proof of the complete equipment of the B.E.F. that even in August 1914 such ponderous machines were on the French roads, drawing their load of supplies.

'SLEEP-WALKERS' of the GREAT RETREAT

by Cpl. B. J. Denore

CORPORAL BERNARD JOHN DENORE of the 1st Royal Berkshire Regt., which was in the 2nd Division of the 1st Army Corps at the battle of and the retreat from Mons, here describes most vividly in diary form the experiences of a non-commissioned officer from the beginning to the end of those exhausting days. Corporal Denore was wounded (in seven places) four weeks later at Zonnebeke during the 1st battle of Ypres and invalided home



THE KAISER'S CAVALRY ARRAYED FOR WAR

The first contacts between the opposing armies in the World War were made by the cavalry of the Allies and the Central Powers. Above is the head of a German Dragoon regiment on the march, while below dragoons are crossing a stream. Their shining helmets are covered with cloth, but they still carry lances, as did all the German dragoons in the early days of the war. It was such a squadron as this that the 1st Berkshire encountered.

AUGUST 23.—We had been marching since 2.30 a.m., and about 11.15 a.m. an order was passed down for "A" Company (my company) to deploy to the right and dig in on the south bank of a railway cutting.

We deployed and started digging in, but as the soil was mostly chalk, we were able to make only shallow holes. While we were digging the German artillery opened fire. The range was perfect, about six shells at a time bursting in line directly over our heads. All of us except the company commander fell flat on our faces, frightened and surprised; but after a while we got up and looked over the rough parapet we had thrown up; and could not see much. One or two men had been wounded, and one was killed.

There was a town about one mile away on our left front, and a lot of movement was going on round about it; and there was a small village called Binche on our right, where there was a lot of heavy firing going on—rifle and artillery.

We saw the Germans attack on our left in great masses, but they were beaten back by the Coldstream Guards.

A squadron of German cavalry crossed our front about 800 yards distant, and we opened fire on them. We hit a few and the fact that we were doing something definite improved our *moral* immensely, and took away a lot of our nervousness.

The artillery fire from the Germans was very heavy, but was dropping behind us on a British battery. The company officer, who had stayed in the open all the time, had taken a couple of men to help get the wounded away from the battery behind us. He returned about 6.30 p.m., when the firing had died down a bit, and told us the battery had been blown to bits.

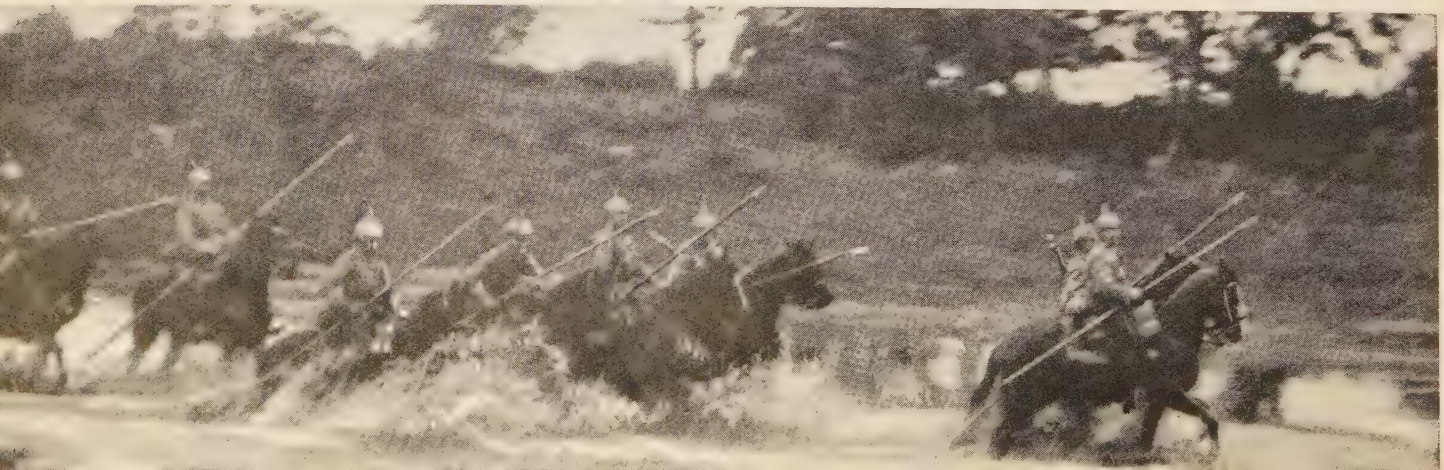
I was then sent with four men on outpost to a signal box at a level crossing, and found it was being used as a clearing station for wounded. After dark more wounded were brought in from the 9th Battery R.F.A. (the battery that was cut up). One man was in a very bad way, and kept shrieking out for somebody to bring a razor and cut his throat, and two others died almost immediately.

I WAS going to move a bundle of hay when someone called out, "Look out, chum. There's a bloke in there." I saw a leg completely severed from its body, and suddenly felt very sick and tired.

The German rifle-fire started again and an artilleryman to whom I was talking was shot dead. I was sick then.

Nothing much happened during the night, except that one man spent the time kissing a string of rosary beads, and another swore practically the whole night.

August 24.—Just about dawn a party of Germans came near and we opened fire on them and hit quite a number. We thought of following them up, but a corporal brought an order to retire. We joined the company again behind the trenches, and learnt that the town we could see was Mons.



After a while we joined up with the rest of the battalion on the road and went back the same route we covered coming up. All the time there was plenty of firing going on by Givry, and about midday we deployed and opened fire on a regiment of German cavalry. They dismounted and returned our fire, which was all "rapid" and was telling on them. Then suddenly they mounted and disappeared out of range. We continued marching back for about four hours. Then again we deployed and opened fire on more German cavalry, but this time they kept out of range and eventually moved off altogether.

My platoon was sent forward to a small village, where we stayed all night firing occasionally at what we hoped were German cavalry.

August 25.—We started off about 5 a.m., still retiring, and so far we had had no food since Sunday the 23rd. All day long we marched, and although a lot of firing was going on, we did none of it. About 6.30 p.m. we got to a place called Maroilles, and my platoon spent the night guarding a bridge over a stream. The Germans attacked about 9 p.m. and kept it up all night, but didn't get into Maroilles.

About forty-five of the company were killed or wounded, including the company officer. A voice had called out in English, "Has anybody got a map?" and when our C.O. stood up with his map, a German walked up and shot him with a revolver. The German was killed by a bayonet stab from a private.

August 26.—The Germans withdrew at dawn, and soon after we continued retiring, and had not been on the march very long before we saw a French regiment, which showed that not all of them had deserted us.

We marched all day long, miles and miles it seemed, probably owing to the fact that we had had no sleep at all since Saturday the 22nd, and had had very little food to eat, and the marching discipline was not good. I myself frequently felt very sick.

We had a bit of a fight at night, and what made matters worse was that it happened at Venerolles, the village we were billeted in before we went up to Mons. Anyway, the Germans retired from the fight.

August 27.—At dawn we started on the march again. I noticed that the curé and one old fellow stayed in Venerolles, but all the other inhabitants went the previous night.

A lot of our men threw away their overcoats while we were on the road today, but I kept mine.



WHERE ONE MORE RIVER WAS CROSSED

As the British Army retreated bridge after bridge over narrow streams and broad rivers was blown up to delay the enemy advance. At this spot near Chauny the 1st Berkshires, as told in this chapter, paused in their retreat southward to cover the Royal Engineers while they blew up the bridge over the Oise. The new bridge is the standard of many hundreds in ferro-concrete.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

The marching was getting quite disorderly; numbers of men from other regiments were mixed up with us.

We reached St. Quentin, a nice town, just before dark, but marched straight through and dug ourselves in on some high ground, with a battery of artillery in line with us. Although we saw plenty of movement in the town the Germans didn't attack us, neither did we fire on them. During the night a man near me quite suddenly started squealing like a pig, and then jumped out of the trench, ran straight down the hill towards the town, and shot himself through the foot. He was brought in by some artillerymen.

August 28.—Again at dawn we started on the march, and during the first halt another fellow shot himself through the foot.

The roads were in a terrible state, the heat was terrific, there seemed to be very little order about anything, and mixed up with us and wandering about all over the roads were refugees with all sorts of conveyances—prams, trucks, wheelbarrows, and tiny little carts drawn by dogs. They were piled up with what looked like beds and bedding, and all of them asked us for food, which we could not give them, as we had none ourselves.

The men were discarding their equipment in a wholesale fashion in spite of orders to the contrary; also many of them fell out, and rejoined again towards dusk. They had been riding on limbers and wagons, and officers' chargers, and generally looked worse than those of us who kept going all day. That night I went on outpost, but I did not know where exactly, as things were getting hazy in my mind. I tried to keep a diary, although it was against orders. Anyway, I couldn't realize all that was happening, and only knew that I was always tired, hungry, unshaven, and dirty. My feet were sore, water was scarce, in fact, it was issued in half-pints, as we were not allowed to touch the native water. The regulations were kept in force in that respect—so much so that two men were put under arrest and sentenced to field punishment for stealing bread from an empty house.

Then, again, it wasn't straight marching. For every few hours we had to deploy and beat off an attack, and every time somebody I knew was killed or wounded. And after we had beaten off the attacking force, on we went again—retiring.

August 29th.—A despatch was read to us, from General French, explaining that the B.E.F. was on the west of a sort of horseshoe, and that the retirement was to draw the Germans right into it, when they would be nipped off. That afternoon we went to a place called Chauny to guard the river while some R.E.'s blew up the bridges.

It was a change from the everlasting marching, and we managed to get some vegetables out of the gardens and cook them. A few Uhlans appeared, but got away again in spite of our fire. So far as I could tell there wasn't a single civilian in the town, and all the houses were barricaded; while outside of them were buckets of wine—pink, blue, red, whitish, and other colours. We were not allowed to drink any.

August 30.—Just as we were leaving Chauny—about 4 a.m.—two girls were found and were taken along with us.

ALTHOUGH all the bridges were blown up, the Germans were after us almost immediately. God only knew how they got over so soon. Their fire was heavy but high; the few we saw were firing from their hips as they advanced. We fired for about half an hour. Then the artillery came into action, and we retired about two or three miles under cover of their fire. Then we waited till the Germans came up, and we began all over again, and then again, and then again, all day long. It was terribly tiring, heart-breaking work, as we seemed to have the measure of the Germans, and yet we retired.

During the evening the Guards Brigade took over the rearguard work while our Brigade went on to Castle Isoy, and bivouacked and slept for about six hours.

August 31.—Again we were rearguard, but did little fighting. We marched instead, staggering about the road like a crowd of gipsies. Some of the fellows had puttees wrapped round their feet instead of boots; others had soft shoes they had picked up somewhere; others walked in their socks, with their feet all bleeding. My own boots would have disgraced a tramp, but I was too frightened to take them off and look at my feet. Yet they marched until they dropped, and then somehow got up and marched again.

One man (Ginger Gilmore) found a mouth-organ, and, despite the fact that his feet were bound in blood-soaked rags, he staggered along at the head of the company playing tunes all day. Mostly he played "The Irish Emigrant," which is a good marching tune. He reminded me of Captain Oates.

An officer asked me if I wanted a turn on his horse, but I looked at the fellow on it, and said, "No thanks."

The marching was getting on everyone's nerves, but, as I went I kept saying to myself, "If you can, force your heart and nerve and sinew." Just that, over and over again.

That night we spent the time looking for a Uhlan regiment, but didn't get in touch with them, and every time we stopped we fell asleep; in fact we slept while we were marching, and consequently kept falling over.

September 1.—We continued at the same game from dawn till dark, and dark till dawn—marching and fighting and marching. Every roll call there were fewer to answer—some were killed, some wounded, and some who had fallen out were missing.

During this afternoon we fought for about three hours—near Villers-Cotterets, I think it was, but I was getting very mixed about things, even mixed about the days of the week. Fifteen men in my company were killed, one in a rather peculiar fashion. He was bending down, handing me a piece of sausage, when a bullet ricochetted off a man's boot and went straight into his mouth and out of the top of his head.

WE got on to the road about 200 yards only in front of a German brigade, and then ran like hell for about a mile, until we passed through the South Staffs Regiment, who were entrenched each side of the road. I believe about six of the battalion were captured. Still we marched on until dusk, then on outpost again, and during the night the South Staffs passed through us.

September 2. At 2 a.m. we moved off, and marched all day long. It was hot and dusty and the roads were rotten, but as we got mixed up with hundreds of refugees we were obliged to keep better marching order. About 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. we reached Meaux. I believe we did about twenty-five miles that day, but no fighting. We bivouacked outside Meaux, but I went into the cathedral when we halted near it, and thought it was very beautiful. Also, I

KHAKI LINE GOES BACK THROUGH A DESERTED VILLAGE

Many of the French villages through which the British Expeditionary Force passed during the retreat presented a very different appearance from what they had done a few days earlier. Then the villagers had lined the streets to watch their Allies go forward, but as they came back the inhabitants had fled south before the invaders. Here a few infantrymen and signallers on bicycles are passing through a village of empty houses and closed shops.

Imperial War Museum



saw some of the largest tomatoes I have ever seen in my life growing in a garden. I was rounding up stragglers most of the night until 1 a.m., and at 3 a.m. we moved off again.

September 3. The first four or five hours we did without a single halt or rest, as we had to cross a bridge over the Aisne before the R.E.'s blew it up. It was the most terrible march I have ever done. Men were falling down like nine-pins. They would fall flat on their faces on the road, while the rest of us staggered round them, as we couldn't lift our feet high enough to step over them; and as for picking them up, that was impossible, as to bend meant to fall.



WHERE THE REARGUARD STOPPED TO FIGHT

The line of retreat of the First Corps and the 2nd Division of the Second Corps lay through Villers-Cotterêts, a small town, still in pre-war condition, the centre of which with its quaint church is seen above. This point was reached on September 1, and by then the retreating troops had covered about 60 miles from Mons as the crow flies. Villers-Cotterêts is surrounded by a forest of the same name, a part of which as it is today is seen in the photograph (right), and in the forest an important rearguard action was fought.

Photos. A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd

WHAT happened to them, God only knows. An aeroplane was following us most of the time dropping iron darts; we fired at it a couple of times, but soon lost the strength required for that. About 9 a.m. we halted by a river, and immediately two fellows threw themselves into it. Nobody, from sheer fatigue, was able to save them, although one sergeant made an attempt and was nearly drowned himself. I, like a fool, took my boots off, and found my feet were covered with blood. I could find no sores or cuts, so I thought I must have sweated blood.

As I couldn't get my boots on again I cut the sides away, and when we started marching again my feet hurt like hell.

We marched till about 3 p.m.—nothing else, just march, march, march. I kept repeating my line "If you can, force, etc." Why, I didn't know. A sergeant irritated everyone who could hear him by continually shouting out: "Stick it, lads! We're making history!"

The colonel offered me a ride on his horse, but I refused, and then wished I hadn't, as anything was preferable to the continuous marching.

We got back that afternoon among the refugees again. They were even worse off than we were—or, at least, they looked it. We gave the kids our biscuits and "bully," hoping that would help them a little; but they looked so dazed and tired there did not seem to be much hope for them.

At 8 p.m. we bivouacked in a field and slept till dawn. Ye gods, what a relief!

September 4. I was sent with six men on outpost to a small wood on our left front, and I had not posted the sentries more than half an hour before an officer found two of them asleep. The poor fellows were afterwards tried by courts-martial and shot.

About 3 p.m. we all moved off again and came into action almost immediately, although I believe it was a food convoy that was mistaken for German artillery by our artillery. Anyway, no one I knew was hurt. It was said, however, that Jerry rushed his troops along after us in lorries.



ALL through the night we marched, rocking about on our feet from the want of sleep, and falling fast asleep even if the halt lasted only a minute. Towards dawn we turned into a farm, and for about two hours I slept in a pigsty. . .

September 5. Early on this morning reinforcements from England joined us, and the difference in their appearance and ours was amazing. They looked plump, clean, tidy, and very wide-awake. Whereas we were filthy, thin, and haggard. Most of us had beards; what equipment was left was torn; instead of boots we had puttees, rags, old shoes, field boots—anything and everything wrapped round our feet. Our hats were the same—women's hats, peasants' hats, caps, any old covering; while our trousers were mostly in ribbons. The officers were in a similar condition.

After the reserves joined we marched about twenty miles to a place called Chaumes. It was crowded with staff officers. We bivouacked in a park, and then had an order read to us that the men who had kept their overcoats were to dump them, as we were to advance at any moment. Strangely, a considerable amount of cheering took place. I discovered that the company I was in covered 251 miles in the Retreat from Mons, which finished on September 5, 1914.



Photos, Illustrations Bureau and Central News

THE FIRST WOUNDED

The first wounded coming back from France, every man a hero, brought the war home to the British people as nothing else had done. None who saw them will forget the emotions aroused. To lend a stricken man a helping hand if possible was a first duty. Above are wounded men at Havre on their way to England. Below (left) is a casualty being helped in an Amiens street, and (right) a wounded Highlander is being carried ashore in England.







L.N.A. and Central News

THE WOMEN'S PART

Stirring incidents were witnessed at the great London railway stations during the early months of the war. Above is a scene outside Charing Cross Station, where a train-load of wounded having arrived, Red Cross Nurses bound for the London Hospital are cheered by an admiring crowd. They pass on their way in a car that might now take part in a veterans' parade.



Right, walking wounded British soldiers are receiving kindly ministrations from a Frenchwoman in the form of an ever-welcome cup of tea. They are being taken to hospital in an English railway van still bearing its peace-time posters.

'THEY WERE GOING to SHOOT ME!'

by Paul Maze, D.C.M., M.M., Croix de Guerre

THE author of this thrilling narrative was for four and a half years one of the most remarkable figures on the Western front. A French artist and a fluent English speaker, he attached himself to the Scots Greys on their landing at Havre and acted as an informal interpreter and liaison officer. Afterwards he was on the staff of Sir Hubert Gough, who pays unstinted tribute to his skill and bravery. Here he tells how during the retreat from Mons he was within an ace of being shot as a spy



FRENCHMAN IN KHAKI

M. Paul Maze attached himself to the British Army in August 1914. He did invaluable work as a liaison officer throughout the war. He was the trusted servant of generals and was awarded enviable decorations, but never achieved commissioned rank. He is to this day a veteran member of the Royal Scots Greys.

AUGUST 26.—I woke up suddenly—it was daylight. I didn't know where I was. I only felt the weight of my boots. I looked at my watch—I had slept five hours. Not a sound came from the village. I peeped through the window—the street was deserted.

I slipped down the stairs into the kitchen, shouting for madame. Her bread and coffee lay on the table. I got no response. Full of apprehension, I ran up the stairs, and as I seized my cap and revolver belt I heard the clatter of horses' hoofs—the square tops of Uhlan helmets were passing right under my window! I paused, breathless; then a motor-car rushed through the streets, carrying a party of Germans, revolvers in hand. I had to push the window open gently to see if anyone else was coming. The two riders I had seen turn off to the right were now out of sight.

I had to act quickly. Fortunately, the village was small. Each farm opened on to a yard. I had to avoid the roads. The kitchen door was locked; it gave on to a small garden. I jumped out of the window and climbed a wall covered with pears, crossed over a lane into a farmyard, slipped through some stables into an open space and made for another farm where a few hens, picking at a manure heap, ran off with much fluttering. At the next farm, looking through a window, I saw some people in a room. I rushed in—they were terrified, reviving themselves with brandy. "Quickly," I said, "which is my best way out of the village? Have you seen many German troops? How long have the English been gone?" They all talked at once. One little fellow, a hunchback, caught hold of my arm and said "Suivez-moi," and I followed him. After much dodging about we came to a wall—I peeped over and saw an expanse of country that looked like the whole of France spread in the sunlight. The trees of two main roads divided the landscape. One led to St. Quentin. I shook the hand of my guide, who said: "Bonne chance, sauvez-vous vite." Hiding the best way I could, I crept towards the road, shuffling noisily through a wet cabbage patch that soaked me to the skin. After a short run I flung myself headlong into the ditch bordering the road.

Carefully I looked around—not a soul could be seen anywhere. I put my ear to the ground, but detected no sound. I got up and ran, dodging from tree to tree, which, happily, were thick and not far apart, stopping only to recover my breath. I watched every haystack, keeping my eye on a village to my right.

I had just paused a moment and was on the verge of rushing forward again when there, standing against a bright wall, were three Uhlans, their shadows distinctly reflected on the wall. My eyes glued to them, I dared not move. A cold shiver ran down my spine as one of them rode his horse across the open towards a group of small haystacks about 200 yards from where I was.

STOPPING suddenly, he stood up in his stirrups and looked through his field-glasses. He took his time, concentrating on certain places. I could see his dark horse lashing the air with its tail. Nothing, evidently, had arrested his attention in my direction, but when he waved to the others and they promptly joined him at a quick trot, I thought I was finished. They stood a while conversing, then looked round, and, to my relief, turned their horses and started at an easy trot, moving back towards the village, their lances with folded pennants rocketing above their heads.

As I had my eyes fixed on them I heard coming up a kind of flapping sound. It was a dog running straight at me. I gave a sudden jerk as he neared; it frightened him off, and with a suppressed yelp he swerved and ran on, his tail between his legs, trailing a lead. Meanwhile, the Uhlans had neared the village and were vanishing behind farms.

There was nothing for me to do but run. I looked in every direction first, and crawled to the other side of the road, seeing as I did the dog, away in front, still running for all it was worth.

WHAT saved me was the depth of the ditch and the bank on both sides of the road. By bending down I could run along nearly sure that I could not be seen from the fields. What distance I covered I don't know, when two sharp shots rang out ahead on my right, echoing from wood to wood. I felt the atmosphere relapse into a drawn silence as I lay with my face to the ground, expecting to hear more firing. Nothing more happened. I got up again, looking intently to the right. I was inwardly so anxious and excited that I could hardly see; the light was also too bright.

I was now nearing the line of trees along a road crossing mine, and as the ground rose slightly towards it on my left I couldn't actually see all of it, so crawled back to the other side. No sooner had I done so than a few more shots were fired, and distinctly I located the report coming from a bushy belt of trees, where for a second I imagined seeing the khaki of our uniforms. The light was so dazzling I dared not yet believe my eyes. But at that moment, unmistakably two of our cavalry strode across the road away in front. Hopes raised, I waited; there among the leaves

I could see red faces. I was now sure. Having advanced a little more, I cleared the bank, waving, and bolting across the distance that separated us I shot in amongst them as between two goal posts. They were our cavalry, dismounted; their horses were just at hand a few paces off. For a moment I could hardly talk. The officer told me that I was lucky, for German patrols were about, and they had been firing at anyone who showed himself. "You are lucky they didn't see you. Your regiment must be about somewhere, they passed early in the morning. You had better walk to brigade headquarters at ——, two miles away; they may be able to direct you."

HAVING joined a Highland Light Infantryman who had strayed from his battalion, and who was walking the same way, I heard the details of a severe scrap in which he had been engaged. His haversack was full of unripe apples, which he kept munching and spitting out. Red-haired, tall, as brown as a berry, with a terrific Border accent, he looked the picture of health, in spite of his weary march. The village we walked into was occupied by our infantry, and in the middle of the market square there stood a throng of officers obviously engaged in stern conversation. Among them was a stoutish man with a grey moustache, General Sir Charles Monro, who commanded the 2nd Division. As I was still new to the army, the sight of red tabs had not the sobering effect on me that it had on a regular private.

RASHLY imagined that the staff would welcome any information that I might be able to give. I boldly approached the group of officers, saluted and inquired the whereabouts of the Scots Greys or of their transport with which I had lost touch. I was about to say where I had come from and what I had seen, when the General cut me short, looked at me from head to toe and replied that the Greys had passed through the village earlier that day, but that he had no idea where their transport had gone. Suddenly his face twitched and he abruptly asked my name; I saw suspicion in his stare. "Where have you come from?" I mentioned the village. "The place has been occupied by the enemy since early this morning," he replied. I felt a stir amongst those listening—one officer walked quickly away.

"What village did you say you were in?"

I could not remember the name.

"What is the name of your colonel?'

My memory failed me entirely.

"What squadron are you in?"

My mind was a blank.

I had the sensation of the ground receding under my feet as I was seized and my belt and revolver taken from me. I was immediately searched, right down to my puttees. Handcuffed, my legs trembling under me, I was led off to join a party of German soldiers and Belgian civilians who were standing by the headquarters baggage, tied to one another. We were marched off at once, escorted by men with fixed bayonets.

I could hardly realize anything. The General and his staff soon after passed us in his car without even looking at us. It was no use my appealing. I



KEY MEN OF AN IMMORTAL ALLIANCE

From the moment of the landing of the British Expeditionary Force until the end of the war, services of incalculable value to the Allied Armies were rendered by the French interpreters. The central figure in this group of seven of them is M. Paul Maze, some of whose remarkable experiences are vividly told in this chapter. All the interpreters in this group are still wearing the uniform of the units in which they were serving prior to their appointment as interpreters, though they afterwards wore the khaki of the British Army.

Imperial War Museum

heard a man say: "Here's another blasted spy." It made me realise the situation I was in.

It was useless to try to get a hearing from my escort. I could not talk to the German prisoners, who all the time were mumbling to me, "Bist du Deutsch?" I dared not answer. I heard them discuss me—they couldn't make out what I was. The three Belgians looked such ruffians I thought it wise not to address them at all. We were made to step out, to keep well behind the rear of the transport.

THERE was a general sign of hurry about everything—riders were driving their heels into their horses, the infantry alongside us were marching fast. The dew had laid the dust, but the sun was very hot, although it was still early morning. Staring at the wagon before me I followed the sound of its squealing as one does a tune. I walked on dazedly, as though in a dream, not realising yet the full extent of what hung over me. A loud rumble of guns on our right grew nearer and nearer.

In a village where we rested later in the day the exhausted refugees livened up as they saw the "espions." They spat at us and threw stones. One French territorial, for some unknown reason alone in that village, came up to us seething with rage, waving his bayonet. Our guard became furious and handled him very roughly. He was foaming at the mouth.

We resumed our weary march, picking up as we went on a considerable number of stragglers belonging to all sorts of regiments. From their appearance it was evident that they had had a bad time—but they looked determined and walked on, keeping in rank. Motor-cyclists and staff cars would rush past, raising a cloud of dust. Artillery would cut across fields, leaving the road free for infantry—everybody was bent on pushing on. Every echo I heard of the situation sharpened my apprehension.

UNHAPPY RECOGNITION

WE overtook a halted wagon line, and as ill luck would have it, three German prisoners we had had with the transport the day before recognised me and waved. As they had been with us for a whole day I had chatted to them a good deal to try to get some information out of them, so, of course, they knew me quite well. How could I explain to the guards, who had seen them greet me, the circumstances of our acquaintance?

The incident was at once reported to the military police, and nothing I could say made things any better. I was in a divided frame of mind, for, although I stood accused and knew I was hated and despised by anyone who caught sight of me, I could not help liking and admiring these soldiers.

WHEN night came I was led to a small shrine on the side of the road. Tired out, I lay down, a meek statue of the Virgin Mary above my head. I remembered what a nun had said on my way north as she had pressed a medal into my hands. Indeed, I needed now all the help in the world, even hers.

The night was very cold. Troops went by incessantly. Above the shuffling of feet I heard my sentry solemnly remark: "Why don't they shoot the bastard and be done with him, instead of keeping us shivering out here all night?" Somewhere in the darkness a fierce engagement was taking place, not many miles away.

August 27.—I was led out of my shrine into a thick fog at an early hour. Artillery, transport and infantry seemed to be all mixed up, and as units extricated themselves from the reigning confusion and got on to the road, an officer shouted out where they were, giving them directions. The three German prisoners of the day before were brought up; I joined them at once and we followed in the wake of a large column of infantry. We were given biscuits and a tin of bully beef. Something serious had happened during the night—I didn't know what it was, but I sensed it by the way the horses pulled and the chains strained, by the voices of the drivers, the pace of the marching men; all indicated the gravity of the situation. The enemy was obviously pressing on. In all this I wondered what would happen to me.

After we had been on the march for some hours, the day cleared brilliantly. Suddenly, as I marched alongside some kilted men, my eyes fell on a French soldier who happened to be a friend of mine. I hailed him and we walked along together. He had fought at Charleroi and lost touch with his regiment. As he knew no English it was difficult for him to explain that I was an



LINK IN AN OLD ALLIANCE

The Scots Greys fought in France from August, 1914, until the end of the war, and despite heavy casualties among men and horses, Scotland's only Regular cavalry regiment retained its greys to the end. By a happy inspiration M. Paul Maze enlisted in the Greys and so served in a regiment whose country was the earliest British ally of France. Here a few men of the regiment are moving along a typical road in Flanders.

Imperial War Museum

old friend, but he managed to tell an officer who understood French.

Unfortunately, this didn't help me, as the troops became separated from each other and I even lost touch with my friend. We walked on all that day —my feet were sore. I had thought much; so many problems and possibilities had flooded my weary mind that I could think no more. All I felt were my feet. A fierce battle was being fought over on our left—I detected the rumble of the French seventy-fives. Late at night I was taken into a bedroom of a large modern house standing in the street of a fairly big place which was plunged into utter darkness.

There were two beds in the room—we were three—I took one. For the first time since leaving Mons my guards took off their boots. I couldn't remember when I had last done so. It didn't seem a relief at first, rather the opposite.

One of the guards was a Cockney whom I felt was sympathetic. The other man, a Scot, never answered when I spoke. Only once did he speak, to say, "Dinna worry, if ye're a spy ye'll be shot allrecht; if ye're no', ye willna be." It was logical enough. My Cockney was much more loquacious. Left once alone with me, he even told me that he knew they were all wrong—that I was not a spy.

I WAS READY FOR THE WORST

I had been resting a little while when the Provost-Marshal walked in with my haversack. He produced several things belonging to me and asked if the razor was mine. Yes, it was; a German razor bought in Hamburg years ago, and I added that if he had had any experience of German or Swedish razors he would use one himself. He went out smiling. After his visit I couldn't sleep—I listened to the guns booming to the east and west of us, the sounds increasing intermittently in an alarming way. The air was heavy with a tension which overpowered all my feelings. I watched the dawn filter into the room. It was barely light when the stairs suddenly trembled with loud footsteps and the banging of rifle bayonets. The door was flung open. The Provost-Marshal stood framed in the doorway and the raucous voice of a sergeant-major behind him ordered the prisoner to be marched out.

Quickly my guard and I slipped on our boots, the Cockney looked up enquiringly. "Never you mind, me lad, get ready quick. Atten-shun, march down," and without a word I followed, ready for the worst. There was a tremendous bustle in the street, created by baggage-wagons and the infantry hurrying through the village. We waited for a chance of getting across. I heard the clatter of horses and men's voices shouting: "Make room for the cavalry!" My eyes then fell on Major Collins leading an approaching squadron of Scots Greys. I shouted: "Major Collins!" He turned at the sound of his name, but didn't see me, for he went on. Desperately I shouted again, but my vain appeals were drowned in the tumult of the rushing traffic, while I became hidden from the rest of the troops by the passing wagons. "There you are, none of the Greys have recognized him," said one of my escort, but as they were bundling me through the clearing made by the disappearing horses, Major Swetenham appeared leading the next squadron. I didn't have to shout to him. He had seen and recognized me.



IN GOOD HANDS AT LAST

After M. Paul Maze's almost miraculous escape from death, he found himself in J Battery of the R.H.A., commanded by Major Seligman, seen in the photograph. Major Seligman had served in the South African War, and retired from the Army in 1919 with the rank of Brigadier-General.

Imperial War Museum

His arm was raised and the squadron had halted. He asked in a puzzled way what I was doing here under arrest. In a few words I told him. "Sergeant, where is the Provost-Marshal?" He had gone on. "Lead me to him," said the Major, and we all hurried across the road, where the escort and I were told to wait.

In a few moments both the Major and the Provost-Marshal were walking towards me with a smile on their faces. "Come along quickly," said the Major, "they were going to shoot you," and stopping one of J Battery's limbers, he told me to jump on it as he had no horse to spare. I felt everything suddenly widen around me.

The battery immediately bolted along the main road towards La Fère, shaking me out of all bearings, but a feeling of relief had surged through the whole of my being. After going on for some time within sight of a small village called Cerizy, on the St. Quentin-La Fère road, we came on to part of the Greys halted in the middle of a cup-shaped plain. J Battery drew up and I immediately went towards Colonel Bulkeley-Johnson, whom I saw sitting on a heap of stone on the side of the road, talking to Major Swetenham.

He looked pleased on seeing me approach, for he had concluded, after missing me for the last two days, that I had been taken prisoner. He expressed, in his charming way, much sympathy for what I had gone through. He said: "You must remember that the 2nd Infantry Division have had a very bad time and they have been very nervy about spies. One can hardly trust one's brother these days, such odd things have happened."

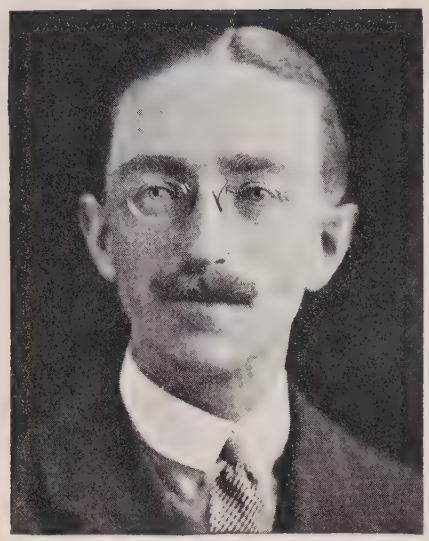
He told me to remain with J Battery in the meantime, as I would be in good hands with Major Seligman, who commanded the Battery.

THE ENDING DAYS:

RED REAPING and RED TAPE

by Capt. E. J. Needham

CAPTAIN NEEDHAM, from whose enthralling war diary is taken this most human story of the grey days of the great Retreat, was with the 1st Battalion Northamptonshire Regt. He and his men were reeling drunk with fatigue day after day. His stirring narrative begins on August 28, the fifth day of retreat, and ends with the orders on Sept. 5 to advance again towards the Marne and the Aisne in pursuit of a retiring enemy



MILITIAMAN AT MONS

In 1906 Captain Needham joined the Militia, afterwards converted into the Special Reserve, and on the outbreak of war he went to France with the 1st Battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment as an " amateur infantry subaltern."

AFTER five days of continual retreating, having scarcely fired a shot at or seen the enemy, everybody's nerves were on edge and it was becoming increasingly difficult to keep the men, and ourselves too for that matter, cheery. They kept asking why we were retiring ; why we did not turn and wipe the Huns off the earth ; what was the French Army doing, etc., etc. We, knowing no more than they did, could only tell them that it was a strategical retirement and that we were retiring to a prearranged and already fortified position—that our retirement would last only one day more, etc. Talk of the " fog of war " !

I shall never forget the last halt we were to have that night. As usual, everybody—officers and men—threw themselves down just at the edge of the road. When the whistle blew for " Fall in " many of the men lay where they were, not in any mutinous spirit but just because they were physically incapable of getting up. My platoon was the rear platoon of the Company, which was the rear company of the Battalion. " Payker " (a fellow officer) and I went round actually kicking the men till they got up and threatening, with our revolvers drawn, to shoot any man who did not fall in at once. We were reeling about like drunken men ourselves, past hoping for any rest, but knowing we had to go on.

At last we got them all on the move, and struggled along in the rear to prevent any men from falling out. About two miles on, at about 1.30 a.m., we found the Battalion was wheeling to the left through a gateway. The Brigade Staff Captain was standing by it and told us as we went through that we were to bivouac in the field and were to stay there the whole of the next day. I do not remember much about getting into that field or what happened afterwards, except that another officer, Joe Farrar, and myself lost ourselves trying to find out where the rest of the officers had to go and, seeing a water-cart, threw ourselves under it and went to sleep at once !

When we woke up in the morning we found we were under one of the 60th's water-carts, that the whole Brigade was bivouacked in the field, quite a small one, and that all the units were hopelessly mixed up together. It had been absolutely pitch dark when we had got in, and nobody had been able to find anyone else, but everyone had more or less dropped down where he was ! How lucky the Germans were not close on our tracks that night and did not attack '

FIRST SHAVE IN EIGHT DAYS

THE next morning, Sunday, the 29th August, we sorted ourselves out generally, the officers got their valises and managed to get a good wash, shave and general clean-up, the first we had had since the 21st at Etroeungt. It was a lovely hot day and we spent it lazing about in the sun, sleeping and eating. It was a real joy to have a day off and especially enjoyable to be able to shave and have a really good wash. All day long we could hear the sullen roaring of the French and German guns behind us. It was very pretty where we were and, except for the aforesaid noise of battle afar, very peaceful.

The next day (August 30) we were off again. I note that the Regimental War History states that we marched before dawn, but according to my diary we departed at 5.30 a.m. We marched through lovely wooded and hilly country, but it was again terribly hot and our feet were, if anything, more tender than ever after our day's rest, though in other respects all ranks were much fresher for it. We were very pleased when we arrived at Anizy-le-Château, which was a very pretty place with an enormous château and park, the former having been turned hastily into a hospital. The officers of the 48th were extremely lucky in being billeted in the château and had a very comfortable night. The men, too, were all under cover and comfortable. Many of them bathed in a stream that ran through the grounds of the château, but personally I did not fancy it as the water looked very muddy, and was also somewhat smelly. However, they seemed to enjoy t '

DURING the march that day, while we were resting at the side of the road in a wood, during a ten-minute halt, the Scots Greys came along and the 12th Lancers. They had had a very hard day of almost continuous rear-guard fighting about three days before, including a fine and very effective charge, and our men lined the road and cheered them lustily. Men and horses looked as hard as nails, but fine-drawn and worn-out. The Greys' horses had all been painted with iodine or some such substance to make them less conspicuous, and they were all a dirty sort of khaki colour. There were many empty saddles amongst their ranks. I asked what had happened to my cousin, Archie Seymour, and was told that he had been sent down to the base, as his ankle had been giving him a lot of trouble and was too painful to allow him to ride. We saw the Greys and also the 20th Hussars frequently during the retreat, as their cavalry brigade were working with the 1st Corps all the time.

The next morning we marched again at 5.30 a.m., very sorry to leave our comfortable quarters. It was again very hot, and we had a very trying and exhausting march. We marched through



THEY WENT BACK BESIDE UNTROUBLED WATERS

Looking at this photograph today it is difficult to believe, with its umbrageous beauty and soft shadows in still waters, that it depicts a scene in the greatest fighting retreat in the world's history. The retreat of the British Army from Mons followed every practicable route, sometimes over the high roads, sometimes, as in this photograph, along the banks of the Ourcq canal. This stretch of water is just south of Mitry, not far from Paris.

Imperial War Museum





IN HER DEATH THROES. The most spectacular incident in the Battle of Heligoland Bight was the sinking of the German light cruiser Mainz by a flotilla of British destroyers. The last stage of the action is shown in this unique photograph by an officer in a British light cruiser. The crew of a 6-in. gun are watching the Mainz, riddled with shell fire, two funnels shot away, sinking in flames.



DEATH'S GRIM HARVEST IN THE AUTUMN FIELDS OF THE MARNE

When the battle of the Marne was fought in September 1914 the countryside of France and Flanders was as yet unspoiled. Here the tide of battle has rolled back from these pleasant fields but has left behind it a grim and terrible reminder of the horrors of war—three soldiers "dead on the field of honour." Only a few months later trench warfare had begun and land such as this which should have been under the plough was churned to a sea of mud by a hail of shells.

the town of Soissons, coming down to it off the hills to the north through some very pretty woods. On the south side of the town we were faced with a long and very steep hill, which proved a most severe test for the wretched transport horses.

There were several dead horses lying at the side of the road, having been shot, as they were too far gone with exhaustion to get up the hill, or even to be led. Poor beasts, mostly heavy draught horses, which only a few weeks before had probably been leading a more or less peaceful life down on some farm!

We finally bivouacked for the night in a field, as usual all pretty well worn out. We started off again on September 1 at the crack of dawn. We halted for some time during the afternoon and listened to very heavy firing going on behind us and to our right. This, it afterwards transpired, was a severe rearguard action by the 4th (Guards) Brigade of the 2nd Division, in which they had very heavy casualties.

Towards evening we marched through Mareuil-sur-Ourcq, and took up a defensive position in the woods on the high ground to the south of the river, while the Engineers were busily employed blowing up the various bridges over the River Ourcq. It was a pitch-dark night, heavy firing was going on apparently all round us, and everybody was expecting something exciting to happen at any moment. Motor-cyclist despatch riders were going up and down the road through the woods, which ran through a deep cutting on the slopes of which we were. It was an eerie feeling to sit there, hearing the booming of the guns all round and to hear the motor-cyclists tearing up and down the road with no lights and being challenged by sentries posted on the road. At one moment we heard one tearing by and then a terrific crash and then silence. It transpired that one of them had crashed head-on into a barricade placed across the road.

Oddly enough, years after I was speaking to a friend of mine, one Jim Brocklebank, who had been a despatch rider at the beginning of the war, and was telling him of this particular occurrence. He said, "Yes, and I was that unfortunate devil!" It appeared that he had been blinding up the road, all out, and had never heard the sentry's challenge above the roar of his engine and the noise of the guns, and had run smack into the barricade. The next thing he remembered was hearing an English voice saying, "Gawd blimey! The —— is alive!" which told him he was, and amongst friends! He was pretty badly smashed up and his machine was in little bits.

The next morning, the 2nd, we were off again at 2.20 a.m.—another very hot and dusty march and the air thick with rumours as well as dust! This continued marching in the wrong direction was beginning to get on everybody's nerves, and it was getting increasingly difficult to keep the men cheerful. They could not understand it, and neither could we for that matter. But otherwise they were simply splendid.

No one who did not go through that retreat can possibly imagine what it was like. Up and away at dawn every day, marching all day in a tropical sun and amidst clouds of dust, generally on the terribly rough pavé roads, or pushed down into the equally rough and very stony gutter by other columns of troops on the same road, or by Staff cars rushing past and making the dust worse than ever.

Never any proper meals, never a wash or a shave, never out of one's clothes, carrying a terrific weight of arms and equipment, and, as regards the 2nd Brigade, never getting a chance of a shot

SOISSONS AS THE SOLDIERS FIRST SAW IT

In the early hours of a hot August day the Northamptons retreating from Mons saw the old town of Soissons as they came down from the hills on the north where this photograph was taken. Soissons suffered heavily during the War and changed hands several times, though most of the time it was in the possession of the French. The Germans shelled the town constantly and did great damage to the 12th century cathedral, which is seen above the roofs of the town.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.





at the enemy except that one day at Wassigny to cheer one up a bit.

An additional difficulty on the road, and one very corruptible to the morale of the troops, was the continuous stream of refugees going along the same roads as ourselves. The terrible tragedy of those poor people! Hobbling along the road with all their worldly goods piled up, layer on layer, on crazy handcarts, perambulators, wheelbarrows, farm-carts, etc., with generally the old grandfather and grandmother on top of all the goods, and all the rest of the family, women and children that is (as all the younger men were with the forces), trailing along in the dust as best they could. Needless to say, the men insisted on sharing their meagre rations of bully beef and biscuits with them, and often, if they got the chance, took a hand to push along their nondescript vehicles. But it was terrible and it was demoralizing.

One felt all the time that they were cursing us—the wonderful British Army that they had greeted so marvellously when we had gone up the line, and which was now in full retreat, compelling them to leave their homes like this, or fall into the hands of the hated Germans.

Some of them did curse us too, and spat at us; but the majority plodded painfully, thankful for any little help we could give them, and apparently oblivious to their future or fate. Nobody knew what happened to them at night, but every day there they were, plodding, plodding, plodding; and the farther south we went the larger grew this other ghastly army—the Refugee Army.

"Red tape" took a hand at this time, too, in what seemed to us the most unnecessary manner. All along these roads of France grew fruit trees, mostly apple, now in full fruit. Naturally all of us, officers and men, picked this fruit as we halted; it was nourishing and refreshing to our dust-parched throats and palates. What possible harm could this have done to anybody but the pursuing Hun? The inhabitants had all left the countryside and everything edible left was food for the enemy. The same applied to food, bread, chocolate, etc., left behind in the shops, the owners of which had fled. Why should we not have been allowed to eke out our rations with them, and why must they be left to feed the enemy? Yet day after day I saw Staff officers riding down the road giving orders for this and that man's name to be taken for "stealing fruit in a friendly country." What utter rot!

The same thing applies to the herds of cattle left grazing in the fields, to a certain extent. In one case, some regiment, I forget which, did drive a large herd before them for days, and these were, I believe, eventually sent down by train to the base to be turned into beef for the troops. But I expect they got into trouble for it! If the cattle could not be driven by us, why could they not be shot, instead of being left behind to feed the Germans? I can now tell the powers-that-were-then that the P.B.I. officers and men had many hard things to say about these things and felt this show of useless "red tape" very bitterly.

On this day it was, I think, that the remnant of the 2nd Battalion the Royal Munster Fusiliers, about two officers and seventy-odd other ranks, came through us. They had been cut to pieces that day on the river Oise when "C" Company had so nearly been cut off themselves at Thenelles. . . . The messengers who were sent to them with orders to retire were killed before getting to them, with the consequence that they never got their orders, were



THE LAST WAR AND THE NEXT WAR

Along this road (top) at Mareuil-sur-Ourcq the 1st Northamptons marched south across the Ourcq and took up a position on the high ground seen in the background to cover the Engineers while they blew up the bridges. Not all the bridges were destroyed, however. The one below stands just as it did in 1914, but all eventualities are prepared for and an old inhabitant is pointing out the demolition box all ready for the charge which will blow it up in the next war.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



Imperial War Museum

ROADSIDE RESPITE ON THE LONG RETREAT

The hardships endured by the British troops on the retreat from Mons were often increased by hot sunshine which made their long days of marching or riding over dusty roads a gruelling experience. Whenever a halt was possible some shady spot was chosen, such as this, where a cavalry regiment (seen also at the end of the Retreat in page 93), enjoys a brief rest. The horses, though not off-saddled, are tethered in the cool of the undergrowth, and the men and their officers are very content with a ditch as a resting place.

surrounded by the Germans and had to cut their way out, with appalling casualties. This remnant of a fine battalion had to be sent to the base and their place in the 1st Brigade was taken by the 1st Battalion the Cameron Highlanders, who had, up to now, been on lines of communication.

We got into bivouac at about 5.30 that evening in a field just north of Meaux, only some twenty-odd miles north of Paris. And, joy of joys, there was a mail in—the first we had had since we left Esqueherries. I had some welcome letters, but none of the cigarettes and tobacco which I was longing for, or of the money which my letters told me had all been sent. I was now down to my last fifteen francs! Our bivouac this night was fairly buzzing with rumours, the chief and most popular being that we had finished foot-slogging for the time being and were to entrain the next morning for Paris, to form part of its defence. The Staff Captain of the Brigade told us he had heard this and believed it was true, which sounded fairly "straight from the horse's mouth." I thoroughly enjoyed my letters and papers. It was good to hear from the outside world after all this long time. But I missed my cigarettes! However, after some food and a final look through my letters and papers, I was not sorry to turn in and sleep the sleep of the just on the hard ground.

We started the next morning at 4.30 a.m., and instead of entraining for Paris as we had been led to suppose we were going to do, we marched east to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where we took up a position on some hills on the north bank of the river and town. This position had a very good field of fire, but we did not at all fancy it, as, if attacked in force, we should have to retire down the hill, through the town and over the one bridge across the river Marne. It was reported that large bodies of Germans had been seen marching west to east.

On our march from Meaux to La Ferté we had seen rather a fine sight: the entire 5th Cavalry Brigade (Scots Greys, 12th Lancers and 20th Hussars) riding in open country parallel to and on the left of our line of march. They made a very inspiring sight. They were acting as flank guard to the 1st Corps and had, of course, their flanking patrols out to the left front. After we had been on our hilltop above La Ferté for some hours, we had orders to retire and recross the river, which we were very pleased to do. The town of La Ferté seemed full of inhabitants, who gave us fruit and chocolate and who were most anxious to know if the Germans were coming behind us. Of course, we had to tell them they were not, which seemed to me an awful shame, but it was necessary to prevent a panic and the roads by which the British Army was retiring being completely blocked with still more refugees. As we were going through the town, my old friends the 12th Lancers came past, and Jack Eden (who was one of my oldest and best friends at Eton, and the eldest brother of Mr. Anthony Eden; he was killed at Mont des Cats in October 1914) reported that they had been almost into Château Thierry and had not seen a German, though the latter town appeared to be in flames. As we marched over the bridge the Sappers were busy preparing their demolition charges, and I, for one, felt very sorry for the inhabitants of La Ferté, who were to be cut off from retreat to the south. We went into billets at a tiny village called Romeny, about one and a half miles south of the river, and shortly after we were settled in we heard the terrific reports of the bridge being blown up.

The next day, the 4th, we paraded at 3 a.m., but we had—marvel of marvels!—a very easy day. We marched across country for a bit and then halted



L.N.A. and L.N.A.

EVIDENCE OF A HASTY FLIGHT

So hasty was the German retreat before the battle of the Marne that they had not even time to take the elementary precaution of blowing up all the bridges over which their pursuers would have to cross. The only ones destroyed were two over the Marne at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, one of which is seen below exactly as it was when the advancing British Army reached this point on September 8, 1914, and above as it is today after rebuilding.





Photopress

WAR COMES TO THE VILLAGE STREET

The people of the pleasant villages of Northern France saw strange sights and heard strange sounds during the British advance to Mons and the retreat. Day and night over the cobblestones where only market carts once passed there was the sound of tramping feet and the rumble of transport and artillery. Here on one of those scorching August days of which Capt. Needham speaks a British transport column has halted for a rest on the shady side of the street.

for some time at the junction of our track with the route nationale. At this juncture we had the edifying spectacle of about half a dozen Staff cars with their gilded Staff and their drivers all busy washing! After a while we pushed on, and about four miles farther on we were marched through a gateway on the right of the road, up a long track to a delightful old farmhouse, with a lot of outbuildings and an enormous walled fruit garden. We were told we should be here for the rest of the day, and that officers would have their valises. There was a little rustic stream running through the grounds, and in this we bathed to our joy. Also, to our joy, we got our valises and were able to have a really proper wash and shave (the first for five days), and to put on clean shirts, socks, etc.

The walled garden was full of fruit, pears, peaches, plums, apricots, apples, etc., in perfect eating condition, and, the owners having left the farm, we were actually allowed to help ourselves, which we most certainly did! Never had fruit tasted better than that fruit. For the next two hours the garden was full of all ranks fully occupied in picking and eating.

Then everybody lay about in the shade and slept. It was another scorching day and it was most pleasant lying there with nothing to do but laze and watch the aeroplanes, our own and hostile, busy with their reconnoitring.

We did make an early start the next morning, at 2.30 a.m., and marched off in a south-westerly direction. As we turned out of the gate on to the main road we saw eight or ten dead Germans and horses lying on the grass at the side of the road! It appeared that a sentry group of, I think, either the Black Watch or Cameron Highlanders of the 1st Brigade, had heard a cavalry patrol riding towards them on the grass at the side of the road. It was a very dark night and they had let them get close up to them and then let fly with their machine guns, and also given them fifteen rounds rapid! They had wiped out the entire patrol.

We marched on through the town of Coulommiers, a biggish place, where the usual hurried departure of the inhabitants was, as always these sad days, taking place. "Galway" Warren, our Transport Officer, managed to buy or "win," I am not sure which, a hooded two-wheel cart into which "Uhlan," our captured enemy war-horse, was harnessed and which, I believe, he afterwards drew for years. "Galway" had done awfully well with the horses throughout the retreat, and I do not think we lost more than two at the most, if that. He had "won" a good-looking blood chestnut which had strayed to us from some cavalry regiment and which he annexed for himself.

I found I was for night outpost, which did not please me at all, as I was feeling very rotten with the most awful pain in my middle, and also felt very sick. In addition, the village was full of rumours of a likely attack by the Hun that night. I got my men told off and in position, and, as it happened, we had a very quiet night, with no alarms or excursions whatever, for which I was truly thankful. During the early part of the night, "Payker" came round to see me and told me that Guy Robinson had been to Divisional headquarters that evening to get orders for the Brigade, and had been told that the retreat was over and that, on the morrow, we were to advance. Great news! So ended the Retreat from Mons.

HELIGOLAND: A STOKER'S SAGA

by 'Clinker Knocker'

FOR sheer power of dramatic description no naval writer of the Great War has exceeded a stoker aboard the destroyer H.M.S. Hind, who under the pseudonym 'Clinker Knocker' (Mr. Joseph Leach) records his memories of the 'fortunate and fruitful' naval action which is known as the battle of Heligoland Bight

THE first ribbon of light streaks the rim of the eastern horizon, flickering like a sickly flash in the darkest hour before the dawn. The "Hind" is cleaving her way through a sea as smooth as glass and as black as ink. A dim lamp sheds a tiny circle of light under the stern of the "Beaver," the destroyer ahead, and that tiny glimmer of light is the only one shown by every ship. It is to warn the ship astern not to come too close. On either side of us can be discerned shadowy phantoms of other destroyers, for we are steaming in divisions of four abreast. The "Fearless" is lost in the darkness ahead, but we know she is there, and we place explicit faith in her leadership.

"Eight Bells!" sounds, low and muffled. We have the morning watch, four to eight. The watches need no rousing nowadays, because we are always on the *qui vive*. We have been lying at our action stations with a pair of boots for a pillow, and the boiler-room hatch is only a few yards away. I take a last, long look at the dark blue dome of sky, and wonder if it really will be the last.

Thinking in this vein I accompany my mates, Mac and Jack Garman, down into the boiler-room. Here we will remain until our reliefs get a chance to take our places. We envy them as they ascend to the upper deck, because they will be in the open air when the battle begins, and we will know nothing until we are relieved.

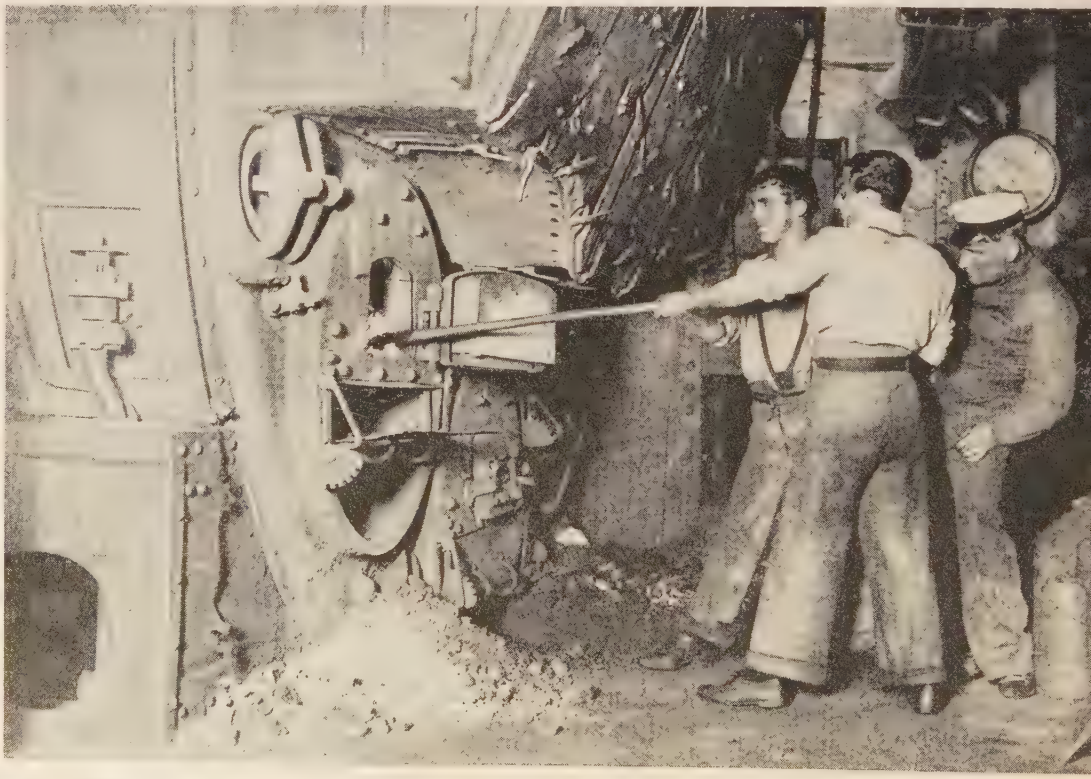
For about an hour we steamed at half-speed, everything working slowly and each of the three engrossed in his own thoughts. Then came the dull, muffled booms of reverberating gunfire. We stiffen to expectant activity!

FULL SPEED AHEAD! MORE STEAM! The telegraph clanged. We opened everything wide, and are kept very busy in the maintaining of two hundred and twenty-five pounds of steam per square inch in the boilers as it is utilized by the engines for the tactics required from the bridge. We are in action! Our guns belch forth death and destruction above our heads, and the ship reels drunkenly under the violent concussions.

The boiler-room in a naval action must be the nearest approach to Hell on this planet. White-hot furnaces! The boilers vibrating with their terrific high pressure. If a shell put the forced draft fans out of action, we would be charred to cinders by liquid flame in the back flash which would surely follow if the air-pressure was cut off. And if a shell wrecked the boilers we would be boiled.

We must not let our imaginations run riot down here, but it is hard to keep one's thoughts from straying to these things. This kind of fighting demands the purest form of courage. A man has to exercise perfect mastery over his emotions, carrying out his duties in a mechanical manner. I glance at my two companions. I know they are thinking the same things as I am. We laugh! Each tries to convey to the other that we don't care a damn. But it is pretence, and a poor one to boot.

The action went on. After what seemed an eternity we were relieved. Petty Officer Gale, Farmery and Foy seemed to think the action was over. They told us that some German destroyers had been sunk, and the "Lizard" and "Lapwing" were at that moment



Photopress

STOKEHOLD AND DEATH TRAP

It is not only in the turrets and on the decks of men-of-war that heroism is shown in action. Far below the water line the stokers—the "black squad"—are at work, and while they hear the thunder of the guns above them they have their ordinary everyday duty to do—fire the furnaces and keep up the pressure. Here is a stokehold in a warship built in pre-war days, such as that in which "Clinker Knocker" worked with the certain knowledge that if his ship was badly hit an agonizing death would be his inevitable lot.

saving the crew of the German Commodore's vessel. We hurried on deck to see what was to be seen. The sight that met our gaze was the finest I have ever seen. On our port bow, the "Fearless" was engaging two German cruisers, and her tactics were masterly. She poured a broadside into one, and at the psychological instant, as the other fired a broadside, "Fearless" executed a masterly piece of tactics; she turned her bows to the foe, then slewed and poured a salvo into the enemy, and both Germans raced away in flames. They were burning fiercely as they disappeared, and no further fighting took place for a while. We chased the blazing enemies, but a mist had settled over the scene, and we lost sight of them.

THE crew were piped to breakfast and ate a hearty meal, and we heard all about the early morning fight from the seamen. "Defender" had also lowered boats to pick up the crews of sunken enemies, and a light cruiser opened fire on "Defender," even in her merciful act of saving life. She had to run away and leave her boats to the mercy of an apparently pitiless enemy. Then up popped the British submarine "E 8," who took the boats' crews of the "Defender" into her conning tower, and gave the rescued Germans a compass and provisions, and set them a course for the *Vaterland*. She then submerged, and the boats' crews of "Defender" told us all about it when the flotilla returned to Harwich.

After breakfast we closed up at our action stations, and the flotilla steamed steadily in the wake of the "Fearless." Not a sign of the enemy until ten a.m. Then we received a signal from two destroyers, "Firedrake" and "Lurcher," who had escorted submarines to the German coast. They had carried out their mission and were now being chased by enemy cruisers. "Arethusa" also signalled she was engaging two enemy cruisers, and was beating them off in our direction. We increased speed and followed "Fearless" to the scene of action.

"Arethusa" lay disabled and full of shell holes. Most of her guns were out of action, and guns' crews lay dead and wounded on her upper deck. We counted thirty-six shell holes in her sides. Commodore Tyrwhitt stood exposed on the bridge giving orders, with his flag lieutenant dead beside him and the bodies of dead seamen lying near. It looked as though "Arethusa" had fought her first and last fight.

"Fearless" then signalled:

"FIRST DIVISION OF FIRST FLOTILLA ATTACK WITH TORPEDOES!"

THIS was the first time in history that a torpedo attack was carried out in daylight, and we knew what to expect. "Ariel" was missing from the flotilla, being in dockyard hands for repairs, and "Hind" took her position in the First Division. Our objective was a large four-funnelled cruiser, and we had only recently experienced a sample of German gunnery from this type of ship. The enemy cruiser looked like a fearful spectre in the distance, her sides lit up with gold and crimson flame as she belched defiance at us, for she had observed our daring intentions. It was very inspiring to watch the two destroyers ahead of us racing at full speed through a cloud of spray towards the curtain of steel and water, as huge columns of water shot up where enemy salvos fell. "Acheron," "Attack," "Hind" and "Archer," in this order, seemed to fly through the sea, with a red and yellow pennant fluttering from the signal yards of each, the red and yellow flashes of the larger cruiser getting nearer and nearer as we raced to the kill.

I experienced no sense of fear, but something inside of me made me wish I had led a better life. I felt sorry for all the trouble I had caused my mother in my younger days, and I made a mental vow that if I came through this ordeal alive I would lead a better life in the future. I have spoken to many since, soldiers as well as sailors, and all say they experienced the same emotions. But immediately we are spared the good motives are forgotten, and we do the same thing as before.

OUR SMALLNESS SAVED US

WE saw the "Acheron" discharge her two twenty-one-inch torpedoes, and she disappeared from view in a hell of shell-swept water, only to emerge again with her stern to the enemy as she raced away to safety. "Attack" was next, and carried out the same manoeuvre. Now it was our turn. We got into position. Shells screamed over us. One salvo fell short to ricochet over us and we were swept with a deluge of water. Only our smallness saved us from being blown into eternity. One torpedo had sped on its errand of death, but something was wrong. We ought to have turned our stern to the enemy and be racing for safety. But still we lay with shells falling around us.

We glanced at our commanding officer, who stood like a statue, as he waited for the after torpedo to leave the ship. He shouted to White and myself to give a hand with the torpedo. We ran aft and found an engine-room skylight hatch open which would not allow the torpedo to be trained on the target. I jumped into the racer, dropped the hatch, and round came the target. I jumped out of the way not a fraction of a second too soon. I would have been cut in two had I not moved so quickly. Hillcrest, the leading torpedoman, was seated on the tube taking his sight, and a shell took his cap off as a salvo skimmed over the deck. We bore a charmed life! By all the rules of war at sea we should have been blown sky-high before now. The "Archer" was almost alongside of us. She came to draw the enemy fire from us as we lay, as she thought, disabled. Our commanding officer thanked the commanding officer of the "Archer" when we returned to Harwich. Shells were still raining around us when we raced out of range.



Russell, Southsea

GREAT DESTROYER LEADER

At the outbreak of war Sir Reginald Tyrwhitt was commodore of the 1st and 3rd Destroyer Flotillas, First Fleet, and he commanded these Flotillas at the battle of Heligoland Bight, flying his flag in the light cruiser "Arethusa." He was on the bridge in the thick of the action.

OUR attack had not given the mighty enemy the *coup de grâce*, but the part we played had saved the "Arethusa" from destruction. Four large destroyers of the famous L Class now raced in to finish the job. What a terrific gruelling they received! The commanding officer of the "Liberty" had a leg shot off, and was still giving orders, clinging to the bridge rail, when a shell took his head off. Her bridge was wrecked, but fortunately she survived. "Laurel,"

" Laertes, " and " Laforey " all emerged with decks running with blood. We saw men and guns disappear in the blinding flashes.

" Fearless " then led us to look for more trouble, and we all engaged the " Mainz " with gunfire. On board this German light cruiser was the son of the greatest German sailor, Admiral von Tirpitz, and the son fought a gallant action against overwhelming odds.

The " Mainz " was soon reduced to a shambles, lying helpless, a shattered hulk, with dead and dying strewing her upper deck. She hoisted the White Flag and we received the order to " cease fire."

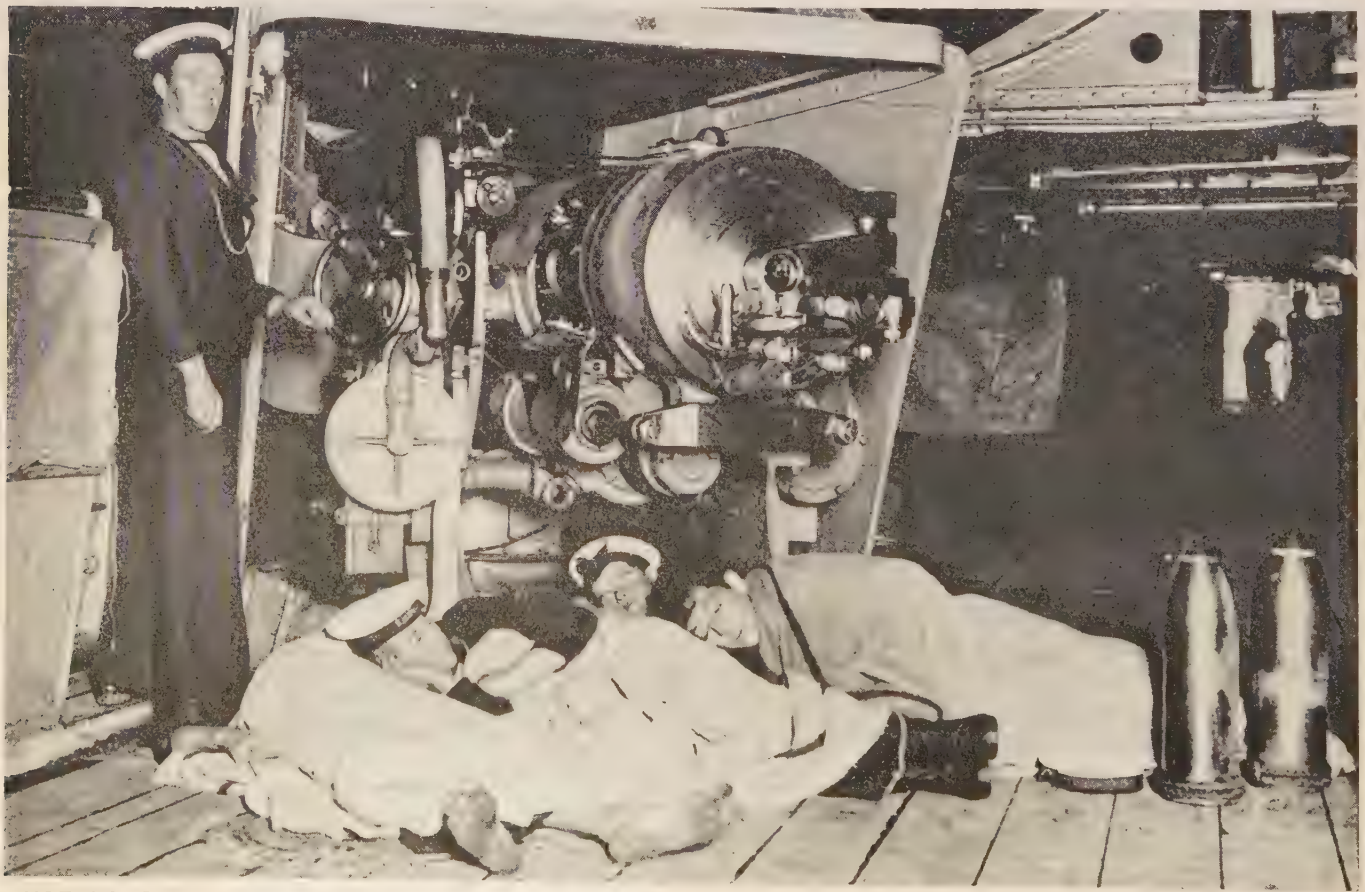
The " Hind " lay almost under the stern of the sinking " Mainz " as the " Lowestoft " and " Lurcher " steamed alongside to take off the survivors, amongst whom was the son of Admiral von Tirpitz. He was serving as first lieutenant in the ship.

Our flotillas at this time were reinforced by a squadron of four light cruisers. We had been fighting a losing battle against heavier vessels, and still more Germans were coming, At noon we sighted the " Lion." " Princess Roval," " Queen Mary," " Invincible," and " New Zealand " racing into the fray. We waved our caps and cheered ourselves hoarse as the mighty battle cruisers majestically steamed past, contemptuously leaving us to finish off the small fry while they went in search of bigger game. The " Lion " fired one salvo at a three-funnelled enemy, and sent us to pick up what remained of her crew. We saw not a sign of any swimming German sailors, the cruiser having blown up.

So ended the battle of the Heligoland Bight. At one p.m. we had dinner (bully beef and bread), and Sir David Beatty gave us orders to escort our cripples home. It was one-thirty when we relieved our comrades in the boiler-room. They had been having a rather anxious time. They said it had been the longest watch they ever kept, and so it was, both materially and spiritually. At two p.m. we started for England, home and beauty, at six knots, keeping a watchful vigil on our slow, limping lame ducks. We were relieved at four p.m. and had a little sleep after tea and felt ready for action again. We were still in enemy waters and anything might be expected. Sir David Beatty was guarding our rear with his battle cruisers. It was wonderful how secure we felt on every occasion that we saw the battle cruisers.

We had a fright when darkness settled over the North Sea. On our starboard beam we saw the shadowy form of a four-funnelled cruiser, and expected a salvo of gunfire from her. To our surprise a tiny light began to wink, and continued to wink for a long time, and we wondered why. It was the " Hogue," which executed a wonderful feat of seamanship by taking the " Arethusa " in tow, and the only means of light in those enemy waters was a tiny hand lamp.

We reached Harwich at noon on the following day, and tied up alongside a new destroyer of even a later type than the L's. This was the " Miranda," first of the M Class to commission. She was manned by a good percentage of reservists, and how they enjoyed our story. The " Arethusa " went back into dockyard hands after only forty crowded hours on the " German Ocean."



NOT TO BE CAUGHT NAPPING

Reginald Silk

There is no watch below when a man-of-war is cleared for action and the enemy may be met at any moment. The whole ship's company remain at action stations and sleep beside their guns. Here the gun-crew of a 6-in. gun are on the upper deck of a cruiser asleep beside their gun with one man on watch. Right are armour-piercing shells, and on the extreme left are bags containing the cordite cartridges which propel the shells from the gun.

FROM THE TRENCHES TO THE CABINET





ANTHONY EDEN

All the three politicians shown in this page served in the war. Above is Mr. Anthony Eden in uniform as a captain in the King's Royal Rifle Corps, with which he served on the Western front, afterwards being brigade major. After the war he turned to politics and his rise was remarkably rapid. He became Lord Privy Seal in 1934 and was Foreign Secretary from 1935 to 1938. Left, Mr. Eden is seen as he is today.







ERNEST BROWN

Above, left, is Mr. Ernest Brown, in uniform. He joined the Sportsman's Battalion in 1914, and was commissioned in the Somerset Light Infantry in 1916. He was awarded the Military Cross and the Italian Silver Star and mentioned in dispatches. Mr. Brown, seen right as he is today, entered Parliament in 1923 and has been Minister of Labour since 1935.



HALIFAX

As the Hon. E. F. L. Wood, Lord Halifax saw active service on the Western front, being mentioned in dispatches. He is seen in uniform as colonel of the Yorkshire Dragoons in the photograph on the left of this page. After holding various Ministerial offices, he was Viceroy of India from 1926 to 1931, and became Foreign Secretary in 1938.

The IMMORTAL STORY of 'L' BATTERY

An Epic of the Great Retreat

by Gunner Darbyshire

THE story of one of the outstanding actions of the early days of the war, the artillery and cavalry stand at Néry on September 1, 1914, is here told by Gunner Darbyshire, of the famous 'L' Battery. Of the characters in this immortal story Captain Bradbury was awarded a posthumous V.C., Sergeant Nelson and Battery Sergeant-Major Dorrell (now Bt. Lt.-Col. and M.B.E.,) were awarded V.C.s, and the author of this thrilling narrative and Driver Osborne, the highest French decoration for bravery in the field, the Médaille Militaire

ALL through the retreat we had been fighting heavily, and throughout the day on August 31 we fought till four o'clock in the afternoon; then we were ordered to retire to Compiègne. It was a long march, and when we got to Néry, near Compiègne, early in the evening, both horses and men were utterly exhausted.

Outposts were put out by the officers, and the cavalry who were with us, the 2nd Dragoon Guards (Queen's Bays), were in a small field on the side of a road which was opposite to us. That road was really a deep cutting, and I want you to bear it in mind, because it largely proved the salvation of the few survivors at the end of the fight.

Having made all our dispositions, we went to sleep and rested till half-past three in the morning, when we were roused and told to get ready to march at a moment's notice. We breakfasted and fed the horses, and expected to be off again, but the battery was ordered to stand fast until further notice.

SERGEANT-MAJOR DORRELL thought that this would be a good opportunity to water the horses, so he ordered the right half-battery to water, and the horses were taken behind a sugar factory which was a little distance away. The horses were watered and brought back and hooked into the guns and wagons; then the left half-battery went to water.

Everything was well, it seemed, and we were now expecting to move off. A ridge about 600 yards away was, we supposed, occupied by French cavalry, and a general and orderly retreat was going on in our rear. Then, without the slightest warning, a "ranging" shot was dropped into the battery, and we knew instantly that the German gunners were on us.

Immediately after this round was fired the whole place was alive with shrapnel and machine-gun bullets, and it was clear that the battery was almost surrounded by German artillery and infantry. As a matter of fact, the French cavalry had left their position on the ridge before daybreak, and a strong German force, with ten guns and two machine-guns, had advanced under cover of the mist and occupied the position, which was an uncommonly good one for artillery.

The very beginning of the German fire made havoc amongst the battery and the Bays, and the losses amongst the horses were terrible and crippling. "Who'll volunteer to get the guns into action?" shouted Captain Bradbury.

Every man who could stand and fight said "Me!" and there was an instant rush for the guns. Owing to heavy losses in our battery I had become limber gunner, and it was part of my special duty to see to the ammunition in the limbers. But special duties at a time like that don't count for much; the chief thing is to keep the guns going, and it was now a case of everyone striving his best to save the battery.

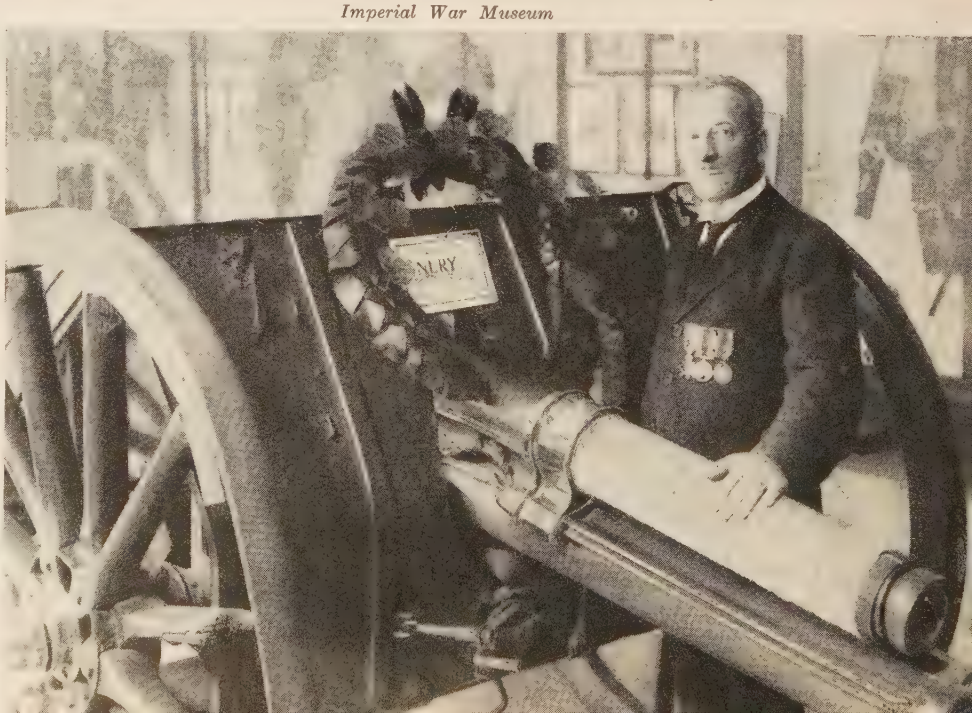
The guns were ready for marching, not for fighting, which we were not expecting; half the horses were away, many at the guns were killed or wounded, and officers and men had suffered fearfully, in the course literally of a few seconds, after the "ranging" shot plumped into us.

THE first gun came to grief through the terrified horses bolting and overturning it on the steep bank of the road in front of us; the second gun had the spokes of a wheel blown out by one of the very first of the German shells; the third was disabled by a direct hit with a shell which killed the detachment; the fourth was left standing, though the wheels got knocked about and several holes were made in the limber and all the horses were shot down. The fifth gun was brought into action, but was silenced by the detachment being killed, and the sixth gun, our own, remained the whole time, though the side of the limber was blown away, the wheels were severely damaged, holes were blown in the shield, and the buffer was badly peppered by shrapnel bullets.

AROUND THIS GUN HEROES FOUGHT TO THE DEATH

Page after page of the history of the war abounds in stories of almost incredible heroism, but none is more unforgettable than that of L Battery, R.H.A. It is commemorated at the Imperial War Museum, where one of the guns is preserved—a stirring reminder of a great deed. Here Driver Drane, who was at Néry, is placing a wreath sent by officers and men of the battery serving in India to commemorate the anniversary of the action.

Imperial War Museum



In a shell fire that was incessant and terrific, accompanied by the hail of bullets from the Maxims, we got to work.

The 13-pounders of the Royal Horse Artillery can be fired at the rate of fifteen rounds a minute, and though we were not perhaps doing that, because we were short-handed and the limbers were about thirty yards away, still we were making splendid practice, and it was telling heavily on the Germans.

As the mist melted away we could see them plainly — and they made a target which we took care not to miss.

As soon as we got No. 6 gun into action I jumped into the seat and began firing, but so awful was the concussion of our own explosions and the bursting German shells that I could not bear it for long. I kept it up for about twenty minutes, then my nose and ears were bleeding because of the concussion, and I could not fire any more, so I left the seat and got a change by fetching ammunition.

Immediately after I left the seat, Lieutenant Campbell, who had been helping with the ammunition, took it, and kept the firing up without the loss of a second of time. But he had not fired more than a couple of rounds when a shell burst under the shield. The explosion was awful, and the brave young officer was hurled about six yards away from the very seat in which I had been sitting a few seconds earlier. He lived for only a few minutes.

WHEN I felt a little better I began to help Driver Osborne to fetch ammunition from the wagons. I had just managed to get back to the gun, with an armful of ammunition, when a lyddite shell exploded behind me, threw me to the ground, and partly stunned me.

When I came round I got up and found that I was uninjured. On looking round, however, I saw that Captain Bradbury, who had played a splendid part in getting the guns into action, had been knocked down by the same shell that floored me and was mortally wounded. Though the captain knew that death was very near, he thought of his men to the last, and begged to be carried away, so that they should not be upset by seeing him, or hearing the cries which he could not restrain.

By this time our little camp was an utter wreck. Horses and men were lying everywhere, some of the horses absolutely blown to pieces ; wagons and guns were turned upside down, and all around was the ruin caused by the German shells. Nearly all the officers and men were either dead or wounded.

The Germans had ten of their guns and two machine-guns going, and it is simply marvellous that every man and horse in our battery was not destroyed. Not all the German artillery was field guns ; they had big guns with them, and they fired into us with the simple object of wiping us out.



THEY DID BRAVE DEEDS IN DESPERATE STRAITS

In the stand of L Battery the 2nd Dragoon Guards (Queen's Bays) played a part scarcely less heroic than that of the men of the Battery. They too had been caught by the German artillery and many of their horses had been killed under them, but dismounted they played the part of gallant infantrymen and earned the striking tribute that Gunner Darbyshire pays them in this chapter. The photograph shows troopers of the regiment with German prisoners.

Imperial War Museum

It was not many minutes after the fight began in the mist when only No. 6 gun was left in the battery, and four of us survived to serve it—the sergeant-major (who had taken command), Sergeant Nelson, myself and Driver Osborne —and we fired as fast as we could in a noise that was now more terrible than ever, and in a little camp that was utter wreckage. It was not long before we managed to silence several German guns. But very soon Sergeant Nelson was severely wounded by a bursting shell, and that left only three of us.

CAVALRY'S FINEST WORK

THE Bays' horses, like our own, had been either killed or wounded, or had bolted, but the men had managed to get down on the right of us and take cover under the steep bank of the road ; and from that position, which was really a natural trench, they fired destructively.

British cavalry, dismounted, did some glorious work in the Great War, but they did nothing finer, I think, than their work near Compiègne on that September morning. And of all the splendid work there was none more splendid than the performance of a lance-corporal who actually planted a machine-gun on his own knees and rattled into the Germans with it. There was plenty of kick in the job, but he held on gamely, and he must have done heavy execution with his six hundred bullets a minute.

By the time we had practically silenced the German guns, the three of us who were surviving were utterly exhausted. Osborne, who was kneeling beside a wagon wheel, had a narrow escape from being killed. A shell burst between the wheel and the wagon body, tore the wheel off, and sent the spokes flying all over the place. One of the spokes caught Osborne just over the ribs and knocked him over.

The three of us had served the gun and kept it in action till it was almost too hot to work, and we were nearly worn out. But we went on firing, and with a good heart, for we knew that the Germans had been badly pounded, that the Bays had them in a grip, and that another battery of horse-gunners was dashing to the rescue. On they came, in glorious style. There is no finer sight than a horse battery galloping into action.

Two or three miles away from us, "I" Battery had heard the heavy firing and knew that something must be happening to us. Round they turned, and on they dashed, taking everything before them and stopping for nothing till they reached a ridge about 2,000 yards away ; then they unlimbered and got into action, and never was there grander music heard than that which greeted the three of us who were left in "L" Battery when the saving shells of "I" screamed over us and put the finish to the German rout.



HOW THE MARNE WAS BRIDGED BY THE INDOMITABLE RESOURCE OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS

The 19th Infantry Brigade is here seen crossing the river by a pontoon bridge on September 10, a day after it was reported by the observers of the R.F.C. that the Germans were still in retreat, and that the country north of the Marne was free from enemy troops. The construction of this bridge at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre presented great difficulties as the Marne is here from 200 to 300 feet wide and the four service pontoons available were only sufficient to span about 75 feet. Barrel piers, boats and barges had to be collected before the bridge could be constructed, as well as extra planking. The Royal Engineers, however, achieved the almost impossible and here contemplate with justifiable satisfaction the result of their work. One of the barges pressed into service is seen in the foreground

Imperial War Museum

SECTION IV

The Marne and The Aisne

Sept. 5 — Sept. 22, 1914

BY September 5, 1914, the agonizing retreat from Mons was at an end. The Germans had shot their bolt and missed their objectives of Paris and the Channel Ports. Conforming to the forward movement of the French armies the British Expeditionary Force now took part in the advance which involved the crossing of five rivers, the chief of which were the Marne and the Aisne. ¶ The battles which ensued are here brilliantly described by a team of writers who were on the spot when these stirring events took place. ¶ The late Hon. Aubrey Herbert writes of days in captivity and his rescue by the victorious Allies, Dr. Martin of his adventures with a Field Ambulance, Captain Lucy of tortured days with the infantry, Colonel Strange of his view of the battles from the air, and Captain Needham of a mixed action in which the white flag was suspected of being abused. ¶ There is added a thrilling account of the loss of the cruisers "Aboukir," "Cressy," and "Hogue."

✱30 Sept. 5—Sept. 10, 1914

'LOCUSTS of STEEL'

Emotional Entries from the Diary of a Casualty

by the Hon. Aubrey Herbert

As I swung into the saddle a shot came from just behind me, missing me. I rode back as fast as Moonshine would go. The lull in the firing had ceased, and the Germans were all round us. One could see them in the wood, and they were shooting quite close. The man who finally got me was about 15 to 20 yards away; his bullet . . . came into my side broken up. It was like a tremendous punch. I galloped straight on to my regiment and told the Colonel . . . He said: ". . . I am sorry that you are hit. I am going to charge." He had told me earlier that he meant to if he got the chance.

I got off and asked them to take on my horse. Then I lay down on the ground and an R.A.M.C. man dressed me. The Red Cross men gave a loud whistle when they saw my wound, and said the bullet had gone through me. The fire was frightfully hot. The men who were helping me were crouching down, lying on the ground. While he was dressing me a horse—his, I suppose—was shot just behind. I asked them to go, as they could do me no good and would only get killed or taken themselves. The doctor gave me some morphia, and I gave them my revolver.

They put me on a stretcher, leaving another empty stretcher beside me. This was hit several times. Shots came from all directions, and the fire seemed to be lower than earlier in the day. The bullets were just above me and my stretcher. I lost consciousness for a bit; then I heard my regiment charging. There were loud cries and little spurts of spasmodic shooting; then everything was quiet and a deep peace fell upon the wood. It was very dreamlike. It is really very difficult to reconstruct this fight. I think every man's attention was fixed like iron on doing his own job, otherwise they would all have noticed more. . . .

As I lay on the stretcher a jarring thought came to me. I had in my pocket the flat-nosed bullets which the War Office had served out to us as revolver ammunition. They are not dum-dum bullets, but would naturally not make as pleasant a wound as the sharp-nosed ones, and it occurred to me that those having them would be shot. I searched my pockets and flung mine away. I did not discover one which remained and was buried later on—but neither did the Germans. It was first hearing German voices close by that jogged my memory about these bullets, and the Germans were then so close that I felt some difficulty in throwing the bullets away. The same idea must have occurred to others, for later I heard the Germans speaking very angrily about the flat bullets they had picked up in the wood, and saying how they would deal with any one in whose possession they were found.

THE glades became resonant with loud, raucous German commands and occasional cries from wounded men. After about an hour and a half, I suppose, a German with a red beard, with the sun shining on his helmet and bayonet, came up looking like an angel of death. He walked round from behind, and put his serrated bayonet on the empty stretcher by me, so close that it all but touched me. The stretcher broke and his bayonet poked me. I enquired in broken but polite German what he proposed to do next; after reading the English papers and seeing the way he was handling his bayonet, it seemed to me that there was going to be another atrocity. He was extraordinarily kind and polite.

He put something under my head; offered me wine, water and cigarettes. He said: "Wir sind kamaraden."

Another soldier came up and said: "Why didn't you stay in England—you who made war upon the Boers?" I said: "We obeyed orders, just as you do; as for the Boers, they were our enemies and are now our friends, and it is not your business to insult wounded men." My first friend then cursed him heartily, and he moved on.

The Germans passed in crowds. They seemed like steel locusts. Every now and then I would hear: "Here is an officer who talks German," and the crowd would swerve in like a steel eddy. Then: "Schnell Kinder!" and they would be off. They gave a tremendous impression of lightness and iron.



Elliott & Fry

PRISONER OF WAR

A son of the 4th Earl of Carnarvon, the late Hon. Aubrey Herbert had been a captain in the Irish Guards, and was also for a time in the Diplomatic Service. At the outbreak of war he was a Member of Parliament for South Somerset

After some hours, when my wound was beginning to hurt, some carriers came up to take me to a collecting place for the wounded. These men were rather rough. They dropped me and my stretcher once, but were cursed by an officer. They then carried me some distance, and took me off the stretcher, leaving me on the ground. The Germans continued to pass in an uninterrupted stream.

One motor cyclist, but with a bayonet in his hand, was very unpleasant. He said : " I would like to put this in your throat and turn it round and round," waving it down to my nose. That sort of thing happened more than once or twice, but there were always more friends than enemies, though as night fell the chance of being left without friends increased.

As it grew dark, I got rather cold. One of the Germans saw this, covered me with his coat and said : " Wait a moment, I will bring you something else." He went off, and, I suppose, stripped a dead Englishman and a dead German. The German's jersey which he gave me had no holes in it ; the Englishman's coat had two bayonet cuts.

THE wounded began to cry dreadfully in the darkness. I found myself beside Robin [a fellow officer], who was very badly wounded in the leg. The Germans gave me water when I asked for it, but every time I drank it made me sick. At, I suppose, 9.30 or 10 p.m., they took us off into an ambulance and carried us to a house that had been turned into a hospital. I was left outside, talking to a Dane who was very anti-German, though he was serving with them as a Red Cross man. He cursed them loudly in German. He said it was monstrous that I hadn't been attended to, that the Germans had had a defeat and would be beaten. I said : " Yes, it's all true, but please stop talking, because they'll hear you and punish me."

Just before 12 o'clock they carried me into the hospital on to the operating table, and dressed my wound quickly.

Then I was helped out to an outhouse and lay beside Robin. It was full of English and German wounded. They gave us one drink of water and then shut and locked the door and left us for the night. One man cried and cried for water until he died. It was a horrible night. The straw was covered with blood, and there was never a moment when men were not groaning and calling for help. In the morning the man next to Robin went off his head and became animal with pain. I got the Germans to do what was possible for him. I asked the Germans to let me out, and they helped me outside into a chair, and I talked to an officer called Brandt. He sent a telegram to the German authorities to say that Robin and I were lightly wounded, and asking them to let our families know. He would not let me pay. I would have liked to have done it for everyone, but that wasn't possible.

They took us away in an ambulance at about 11 o'clock. It was a beautiful

FROM SUNSHINE TOWARDS THE SHADOW OF DEATH

As the British troops moved forward in the Autumn of 1914 through France and Belgium, war, with its terrible toll of death and suffering, seemed still far away. Here on a sunny October day men of the 2nd Cavalry Division are halted for a rest on the way to take their part in the battle of the Marne, coming into action for the first time. Except for the French Cuirassier on the left, whose mount is at the moment a bicycle, the scene might be a Surrey village ; but a few days later these men were facing death with unflinching courage.

Imperial War Museum





BEFORE A GLORIOUS VICTORY

During the second day of the battle of the Marne an important part was played by the 19th Infantry Brigade in the operations which resulted in the British and French recrossing the Marne and driving the Germans back. Here the 19th Brigade is seen going into action at Signy Signets, and the capture of that place carried the British to the high ground overlooking the Marne. Guns of the 29th Brigade R.F.A. are seen on the right coming into action to support the infantry.

Imperial War Museum

September day, very hot indeed. The heat in the covered ambulance was suffocating, and Robin must have suffered horribly. He asked me the German for " quick," and when I told him, urged the Germans on. There were great jolts and . . .

At Viviers I found Shields, who said to me : " Hallo, you wounded, and you a volunteer, too ? "—as if a volunteer ought to be immune from wounds. We were carried upstairs and told that Valentine and Buddy [fellow officers], whom I had last met under the cedars, were in the same hospital. Valentine had the point of his elbow shot away just after I had left him. He raised his hand to brush a wasp off his neck, and only remembered pitching forward when a bullet struck his elbow. He woke up in a pool of blood. A German came up and took the flask of brandy that I had given him after my visit to Soissons.

He gave Valentine a drink and then, when Valentine had said he did not want any more, swigged the whole of the rest off. It was enough to make two men drunk, solidly, for hours. Later, five Germans came up to Valentine and ragged him. One of them kicked him, but an officer arrived, took all their names, promised Valentine they should be punished, and attached an orderly to him for the night. Buddy was badly wounded in the back and arm. He found his servant in the church at Viviers.

Then we all met at the house in Viviers. The doctors gave Robin and me a strong dose of morphia. That afternoon a German doctor, whose name was Hillsparck, came in and woke me. He gave me a gold watch with a crest on it, and a silver watch and a purse of gold (£8 in it). He said that a colonel to whom the watch belonged had been buried close by in the village of Haraman, and asked me if I could say who he was. We heard that the Colonel had been killed, and I imagined it must have been him, but we could not tell, as apparently every single man of the seventy odd who had charged with him had been killed. The doctor left this watch with me. . . .

Our experiences on the field were all the same. We were all well treated, though occasionally we were insulted. In hospital an old *oberstadt* was in command of the doctors. He was very good to us. The English doctors were W., in command, S. next, Rankin and Shields. They were all good doctors. W., Rankin and Shields were excellent fellows. Rankin, who has been killed since, himself wounded, was dressing the wounded on the field and was recommended for the V.C. Shields has been killed in the same way, and I believe would have been recommended but that his C.O. was also killed. They were both the best sort of man you can find.

After a couple of days I moved into Buddy and Valentine's room. A little way down the street there was the château, full of wounded Germans. Our men were carried there to be operated upon.

W. and the other doctors who went to help discovered that there were 311 wounded Germans as against 92 of our own, so we didn't do badly.

Every morning the German sentries

used to come in and talk to us. My German and Buddy's was very weak, but we managed to get along all right. Downstairs those who were lightly wounded sat outside in the chairs they took from the house, in the sunny garden. It was a fairly luxurious house, with paper marked "F.H." I thought it was a girls' school, for the only books we could find were the "Berger de Valence" and Jules Verne.

My side was painful the first few days. Then they cut me open and took out the bullet, which was all in bits. It was rather hard lines on the others to perform an operation in the room, but I felt much better after it. The food difficulty was rather acute. There was very little food, and what there was was badly cooked. We lived principally on things that S. called "chupatti"—thick, unleavened biscuits.

THE men began to give trouble. There was nobody in command of them. There was an ex-comedian who was particularly tiresome. We had to ask the Germans to punish one man for us. About the fourth day one of the orderlies escaped—Drummer McCoy. He passed for four days through the German lines, and on one occasion watched a whole Army Corps go by from the boughs of a tree. Then he found the French, who passed him on to the English, where he went to the Staff and told them of us. That is how we were picked up so quickly on the 11th.

GERMAN STORIES

HERE is a copy of my diary for September 9: The people are beginning to return, but not the priest, who is with the army. We want him for the regiment. Up till this time only six of the wounded have died. The Germans tell us every kind of story—the United States are declaring war on Japan, Italy on France, Denmark on England, etc., etc. Also that Paris has been given twelve hours to accept or reject the German terms, and if the French Government is obdurate the town will be bombarded. We are told that we are to be taken as prisoners to Madgeburg. It is a week since I have had a cigarette.

Thursday, September 10. We are all very anxious to get news home, but there is no chance. Last night S. Herbert died. I had a Testament, and Valentine and I found verses which W. read over his grave. Valentine has bad pain. Three bones broken in his arm and the point of his elbow gone. Buddy is better, but hit cruel hard. Robin has a bad wound, and is very restless. They don't like giving us morphia. Luckily, I have got my own medicine chest, which is a good thing for all of us, as I can give the others sleeping draughts. Last night a French cavalry patrol came within two miles of us. Early this morning there was rifle fire close by. It sounded in the wood that we suppose is Haraman.

WE think the Germans may evacuate this place any time. The bandages have given out. Stores are not coming in.

There is a big aeroplane depot quite close by, and the whole air is full of aeroplanes. It looks and feels as if there might be a big battle round here soon. They have shot an old man wandering about the aerodrome. But he was asking for it.

THE FRENCH ARE COMING

9 *a.m.* The aeroplanes are being shifted from the depot. Last night we heard that arms were issued to all the wounded Germans in hospital who could carry them. This morning the Germans are digging trenches hard. There are Red Crosses everywhere. The doctors want us to go down to the cellars if we are shelled. The French women in the village say that the French are coming; firing is increasing.

9.15 *a.m.* The German Hospital across the way is ordered to be ready to move at once.

10.25 *a.m.* An order has come for all prisoners to parade at the church at 12 o'clock. The German lightly wounded are being sent on. We are very anxious as to whether they mean to take us, too. More of our wounded who have died are being buried.

11.10 *a.m.* A German doctor has come. He said: "They are going and taking all [of our i.e. British] prisoners, 18 [of our] lightly wounded, and leaving 25 [of their] badly wounded." French wounded are now coming in. We have no more bandages at all. A German sentry with whom I had talked has just come in. I asked him some days ago to buy some handkerchiefs. He said: "I have not been able to buy you any handkerchiefs, or to get the cigarettes you wanted, but here is one of my own handkerchiefs, which I have washed. We have got to go."

8 *p.m.* The last order is that the previous orders are countermanded and the Germans are to stay on ten days.

Friday, September 11. Our English prisoners were marched off this morning. We are full of speculation as to what has really happened. Valentine, Buddy and I are well.

10.10 *a.m.* There are machine-guns about four miles away.

10.30 *a.m.* There is heavy rifle fire within a mile. It is very trying lying here in bed. We have nothing to read except "The Rajah's Heir," which V. sent to me, and which has become known as the treasure-house of fun. It is a sort of mixture of Hymns Ancient and Modern and the "Fairchild Family."

2 *p.m.* There is a Maxim within a few hundred yards of the house. Rifle volleys outside in the garden. A rising wind and rain threatening.

3 *p.m.* Heavy rain. The French are visible, advancing.

3.10 *p.m.* The French are here. They came in in fine style, like conquerors; one man first, riding, his hand on his hip. The German sentries who had been posted to protect us wounded walked down and surrendered their bayonets. The German doctors came to us for help. I offered to go, but W. went. The French infantry and cavalry came streaming through. Our wounded went out into the pouring rain to cheer them. They got water from our men, whose hands they kissed. The German guns are on the skyline. The Germans are in full retreat, and said to be cut off by the English.

5 *p.m.* A heavy bombardment of the German guns began from here. I have come upstairs to a long, low garret with skylights, in order to leave Valentine and Buddy more room. Through the skylight one can see every flash of the French and German guns. The doctors all came up here to watch with their field glasses through my skylights.

COURTESY RETURNED

Saturday, September 12. Yesterday when W. went down he found the German doctors receiving cavalier treatment from the French. He explained to the French that they had treated us with the greatest kindness; after that the French treated with courtesy the old *oberstadt*. Shields carved a great wooden tombstone for the thirteen men who had died up to date. It is a month today since I left England.

THIS afternoon Colonel Thompson, English Staff Officer attached to General Manoury, who had been attached to the Serbian Army through the last war, came in. McCoy, who had escaped, had found him and told him about us at Viviers. He said he would take me into Villers-Cotterets after he had done some other business. We talked a lot about the Balkans, but I finally went back and lay down in my garret and shall not get up again today.

Sunday, September 13. I went off with Thompson this morning. We passed through the wood where we had had the fight, and a long grave of 120 men was shown to me by McCoy.

The DAY WE FORCED the PASSAGE of the MARNE

by A. A. Martin, M.C., Ch.B., F.R.C.S.Ed.

DR. MARTIN, who had seen active service in South Africa in 1901, was in 1914 attached to the Field Ambulance of the 5th Division. In telling phrases he recounts his experiences on the day when the victorious British army crossed the Marne. He had unequalled opportunity of watching the exciting incidents of an historic advance

COULOMMIERS at this time looked a little bit *dégagé*. It had been occupied by the Germans some days previously, and now the British had it. The French inhabitants were in Paris. The narrow old streets looked very cheerful and inviting when I passed through, for our Army Service men had several fires merrily blazing at the side of the pavé, and the smell of frying bacon and roasting coffee beans was inviting and appetizing. Signs of the German occupation were everywhere apparent. Round the ashes of their fires in the side streets and square were the charred remains of old and valuable furniture—a carved leg of an old chair, a piece of the frame of a big mirror, a bit of a door, and so on. I think the German soldier enjoyed the novel sensation of cooking his food over burning cabinets and tables and chairs made in the times of the Louis of France. Our men were extremely careful to avoid damage to French property, and made their fires of chopped wood logs. Tommy has good feelings and is always a gentleman, and he genuinely pitied the French in their despoiled towns.

My orders were to report to the Principal Medical Officer of the 5th Division of the 2nd Army. The headquarters of General Smith-Dorrien, the Commander of the 2nd Army, was a little cluster of houses by the roadside, and when we arrived the whole staff were standing by the road, while the grooms stood near holding their horses.

Smith-Dorrien with another staff officer was poring over a map and indicating some spot on it with his finger. The Principal Medical Officer, Colonel Porter of the Army Medical Staff, was just coming out of a cottage, and I walked up, saluted, and reported my arrival. The Colonel gave me a cheery greeting, asked if I had breakfasted, and, noticing the South African War ribbon on my tunic, said that as I had seen service before I would soon be quite at home.

I WAS then told to report to the officer commanding a section of the 15th Field Ambulance, which was lying about 500 yards farther down the road. I reported to Major O—— of the Royal Army Medical Corps, who told me that he was waiting to evacuate some wounded to Coulommiers before moving up to rejoin the headquarters of the ambulance which was advancing



NON-COMBATANTS BUT ALL OF THEM HEROES

No men of the British Army deserved better of their country and their comrades than those who served in the Field Ambulances of the R.A.M.C., of whose work Dr. Martin tells in this chapter. The 18th Field Ambulance of the 6th Division is here seen halted for the midday rest at Hartennes, south of Soissons, during the retreat from Mons. The men had dealt with death and suffering for days like heroes, and but a little later they were back in the fighting line on the Marne, risking life and limb with undiminished courage and the finest spirit of self-sacrifice.

Imperial War Museum



VILLAGE WHERE BRITISH AND GERMANS WERE AT DEATH GRIPS

There was sharp fighting at many points during the advance to the Aisne on September 12, 1914. The British troops found one bridge over the Vesle at Braine intact. The crossing was forced, and at eleven o'clock in the morning the three regiments of the 1st Cavalry Brigade, the 2nd Dragoon Guards, the 5th Dragoon Guards and the 11th Hussars, attacked, and for two hours there was a fierce fight in and about the village. The casualties were heavy, and above is the scene in the main street of Braine when the Germans had been driven out and the wounded were being evacuated.

Imperial War Museum

with the 15th Infantry Brigade. There were sixteen wounded British in a small farmhouse beside the road. They were lying on straw on the floor and the wounds of all of them had been dressed. When I entered they were drinking milk supplied by the old farmer and his wife.

This old farmhouse had been occupied by the Germans two days previously, and the old farmer brought me through the house to show what the Huns had done. His two wooden bedsteads had been smashed. All his wife's clothes had been taken out of a chest of drawers and torn up, and the chest had been battered badly with an axe. The windows were broken and two legs of the kitchen table had been chopped off.

An old family clock lay battered in a corner, and an ancient sporting gun was broken in two. The farmer showed me one of his wife's old bonnets which had been thrown into the fire by these lovely Germans and partially burned. Fancy burning an old woman's bonnet! Two German soldiers got into the fowl-yard and struck all the birds down with their bayonets. A fine Normandy dog lay dead at the garden gate, shot by a German non-commissioned officer because the poor beast barked at him.

The old-fashioned furniture and adornments of the house had been destroyed. All the pictures were broken except two—one of these was a framed picture of Pope Leo XIII, and the other was one representing the Crucifixion. We guessed that the German troops must have been Bavarians, who are mostly Catholic.

I HAVE described this wrecked home as it was typical of hundreds of others that I have seen in France. It all seemed so stupid, so senseless, so paltry, and mean. Conceive the frightfulness of burning an old lady's bonnet and smashing an old clock that had been in the family's possession for three generations, and had ticked the minutes to the farmer's folk and whose face had been looked at by those long since dead. The old farmer was in tears and very miserable. He said that the German soldiers were very drunk and had brought a lot of bottles of champagne with them, round which they spent a very hilarious night. One of the men had a very fine voice and sang a German drinking song, while the others hiccupped the chorus. There were certainly a lot of empty champagne bottles lying about, and I don't think that the old farmer's beverage ever soared above *vin rouge*, so the bottles must have been German loot.

About eleven o'clock, while we were still waiting for returning empty supply wagons to take off our wounded, we heard that some German prisoners were being marched in. This caused some excitement, and, speaking for myself, I was consumed with curiosity to see some specimens of this great German army and observe what manner of men they were. Under a strong guard of cavalry three hundred prisoners with about ten officers were marched into a field close to our farmhouse.



AFTER IRON RATIONS A HOT MEAL ONCE MORE

The Army cooks, though they may sometimes have been the butt of Army wit, played an unspectacular part in the war, for which every soldier must be grateful. Whenever it was humanly possible the field kitchen was got to work, often under conditions which would have dismayed any men less resourceful, and a hot meal was forthcoming. This photograph shows a scene with the B.E.F. late in September 1914. The retreat is over ; the enemy is back across the Marne, and once more the field kitchen sends up its savoury odours to tempt the hungry Tommy.



FROM STRAW BEDS TO BLIGHTY

Every available building was pressed into service to accommodate the wounded in the early days of the war, sometimes only a barn, sometimes a farmhouse, and sometimes such a stately, though empty, château as this. For the wounded only straw beds were available, and here, while British wounded are being carried out, more straw is being carried in, though straw in hospitals was a formidable danger in case of fire, as Colonel Osburn points out in Chapter 13. But straw, too, was often the best bedding the Germans could provide, and blood-soaked at that, as is told in page 130.

Imperial War Museum



STEED OF A SOLDIER OF THE AIR COMES ASHORE

In July 1909, only five years before the war, Louis Blériot had flown the Channel for the first time, and even in 1914 the flight could only be undertaken in calm weather, so that many of the aeroplanes of the R.A.F. were not at first flown to France (as was Major Kelly's, seen in page 143). The machine, seen above, being landed from a transport in France in August 1914 before admiring French men and women, is an R.E.5 two-seater biplane fitted with a 120 h.p. Beardmore engine. To make shipment easier the wings have been detached.



FRIEND OF FRANCE—HE DIED ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR

A touching reverence marked the attitude of the French peasants towards the graves of the British who died on French soil for France as much as for Britain. There is a poignant pathos about this scene in a French village. The group of typical villagers, men and women, old and young, are standing round the grave of a Seaforth Highlander killed in action at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre on September 29, 1914. His greatcoat hangs on the rough wooden cross (as was the Highlander's in page 94), and day by day fresh flowers were placed on the grave.

Imperial War Museum

It was laughable to see our old farmer. He rushed frantically up the road, his eyes blazing with excitement and joy, and stood gazing at his country's enemies with an expression of malicious joy and delight.

I was struck with the appearance of these prisoners. They were very tired, absolutely done in, and marched along the road with a most bedraggled and weary step. Were these the men who had goose-stepped through Belgium's stately capital and had pushed the united armies of France and England before them in one of the most rapid marches in history ?

They were utterly broken down with fatigue, and their famished expression and wolfish eyes betokened the hardships they had recently undergone. When they were halted in the field they simply rolled on to the ground in sheer exhaustion. On looking closer, however, one could see that they were fine soldiers, athletic, well-built, lean, wiry fellows, with shaven heads and prominent features, slim-waisted and broad-shouldered, clothed in smart, well-fitting bluish grey uniforms, well shod with good serviceable boots, each with a light waterbottle clipped to his belt and a haversack over the shoulder; certainly no fault could be found with them as specimens of muscular and active soldiery.

Officers, disdaining to show fatigue, sat by themselves in a group apart and smoked pipes and cigarettes. The famished men were supplied with British bully beef and biscuits, and buckets of water were brought to them for drink. They at once threw off their exhaustion and simply rushed the food. We realized that they had been marched to a stop, and that the commissariat of that particular Army Corps must have broken down. The augury was a good one.

Shortly after the arrival of the Guard Jägers, some empty motor supply wagons returning from the front were stopped. We packed plenty of straw on them and put our wounded British and Germans comfortably on top, and sent them all off to the hospital train at Coulommiers. Then our commanding officer, Major O——, gave the order to our ambulance drivers to harness up the horses and prepare to trek. We knew that our army was making a stand at last, and that the long retreat was over.

All the morning heavy firing was heard on our front towards the river Marne, and we were not sure what was happening. We knew that our cavalry was at work somewhere, for the Guard Jägers had been bagged by our horsemen, but more than that we did not know. However, we were soon on the road, and following Napoleon's maxim to his generals—always to march on the firing. The roads were terribly dusty, the day was hot and sultry, and a blazing sun beat mercilessly down upon us. We all cursed our caps, and certainly the khaki cap supplied to our officers and men deserved a curse. It gave no protection to the head or neck in summer, and in rainy weather it was soon soaked.

Marching on foot behind lumbering ambulance wagons on a dusty road and under a hot sun is no picnic. Eyes get full of dust, throats get parched, feet get hot, and the khaki uniform wraps round one like a sticky blanket. So for many miles we marched, and all the time the sound of the guns became more and more distinct and intense. We passed St. Ouen and by St. Cyr, and at 4.30 o'clock we seemed to be in the centre of the artillery thunder area. Great guns were screeching and roaring all round us, and some of the enemy's shells were bursting to our left front near the road along which we were moving. We were then ordered to pull our wagons off the road and bivouac them under a clump of trees near at hand in order to conceal them from enemy aeroplanes, which were hovering high up in the blue.

The reason for at times concealing a Field Ambulance is that when a column is on the march the Field Ambulance has a definite position in the column;

WHEN GOODS WAGONS BROUGHT THE WOUNDED BACK

In the early days of the war specially built hospital trains such as those which later on provided every comfort for the wounded were very few. The larger type of goods wagon was therefore used to convey the wounded from the railhead to the base. Here British wounded are being carried by men of the R.A.M.C. from such a train to old-fashioned horse-drawn military ambulances, such as those of which Dr. Martin speaks in this chapter.

L.N.A.



generally it is behind the ammunition column. The ambulance wagons, with their big white tented covers and conspicuous red crosses, are often the most prominent features on the road. The enemy flying-man when he sees a Field Ambulance knows that there is at least a brigade consisting of four battalions and an ammunition column in front of it, and he can then direct his gunners to plant their shells in front of the ambulance and so get the ammunition column and the brigade. Hence the necessity for sometimes hiding the whereabouts of a Field Ambulance.

AFTER we had bivouacked, our section cook managed to light a fire in a hollow in a clump of trees, and soon brought us a much desired mess of fried mutton, good bread and marmalade, and a can of tea. We rushed this as badly as the German prisoners did the bully beef earlier in the day.

In a battle one really sees very little and knows very little of what is going on, except in the near neighbourhood. The broad perspective, the great view of a battle, cannot be seen by one pair of eyes. This can only be understood and appreciated afterwards when facts and events are gathered together and dovetailed to form the battle story.

When I was sitting by the roadside on this August afternoon, amidst the crashing and shrieking of the guns, the bursting of the shells, the curious crackling of the rifles, and the snarling notes of the machine-guns, I guessed that a battle was in progress and that we were blazing furiously at an enemy who was blazing furiously back at us. Beyond that, I did not know very much. During the night I learned a good deal more of the day's events. But the whole story was not connected up till many days afterwards. I am quite sure that the people of London knew more about the battle of the Marne from the war bulletins than I did, although I was one of the humble units present in the actual fighting.

WE SAW THE RETREAT

ON this sultry summer day our ambulance section was resting by the side of the dusty road that stretched in our rear towards Paris and on our front towards a lovely green valley at the bottom of which meandered the river Marne. It wound its sinuous way from our far right to our near left. Directly before us, and on the distant side of the river, was a steep ridge, part of a low chain of uplands which rolled hazily away to the right and stopped abruptly in clear-cut lines in our front. The road beside which we sat dipped into the valley and crossed the river on a fine stone bridge and continued through the undulating country beyond to the north.

Small villages were scattered about—Méry to the right, Sacey at the bridge-head, and small clusters of houses and farms on the countryside over the river. Some squadrons of dismounted cavalrymen were standing by their horses in a meadow near the bank of the river.

These horsemen had been busy earlier in the day, and had done some hard riding, cutting off stragglers from the retreating German Army Corps. Infantry were hidden from view in the depths of the valley. Batteries on our left were sending a plunging fire of shot and shell on to the ridge and dips beyond the river, and the road leading from the bridge. With a field-glass, moving dots, and what looked like wagons, could be made out on the road and the field alongside. It was on these moving dots that our guns played, and cloud-bursts of earth and dust showed that our gunners had the range beautifully.

THE GENERALS PASS BY

GENERAL FRENCH passed us twice in his limousine car. General Smith-Dorrien passed twice—General Sir Charles Ferguson passed—all in motor-cars travelling like mad. Gallopers with messages spurred up and down the road. Guns thundered into position, unlimbered and were quickly in action. Infantry marching rapidly passed down the road into the valley where a tornado of rifle-fire was going on. One could make out the distinct note from our own rifles and the muffled one from the more distant German Mausers. Two German shells burst short of the battery on our left and uncomfortably close to us. We were in an odd position for an ambulance—in front of our own battery, which was pelting shot into the Germans and which a German battery was trying to locate.

When the enemy shells fell short they fell near us. Our position, however, was a dress circle box seat as a view-point, so we stopped where we were. It was not every day that one could look on at a real live battle.

Before dusk came on an aeroplane appeared over the ridge flying towards us, and was shot at by enemy aircraft guns. The shells burst all round it, but it sailed triumphantly through them all, and to our intense relief landed safely in our lines with some valuable information.

When the action was at its hottest and every gun was busy, a car raced up from the valley in a swirling cloud of dust. The brakes were jammed hard down opposite us, the side door opened.

Out stepped a well-knit, muscular, lithe figure, looking physically fit, smart and cool in a well-made khaki uniform and red-banded cap. The face was a burnt-brick red, the moustache white, the eyes alert, wide open and "knowing." A savage, obstinate, determined chin dominated the face. It was the chin of a strong, stubborn nature, the chin of a prize-fighter. This was Smith-Dorrien, the Commander of the 2nd Army Corps, and at this moment the 2nd Corps was at grips with the enemy.

With a few rapid strides he had reached the battery on our left, asked some question of the battery commander, and at once clapped field-glasses to his eyes and gazed long and intently at a spot on the other side of the valley pointed out to him by the battery commander. Our party of officers, filled with curiosity, also got out field-glasses and focussed in the same direction. Our shells could be seen bursting on a far ridge, and after a long stare we managed to make out what we thought were some guns, but we were not sure. A few more words to the battery commander, a careless salute, and Smith-Dorrien was back in his car, which was rapidly turned and disappeared "eyes out" down the dusty road up which it had but just come.

THE FIELD-MARSHAL LEADS

AS the car disappeared a tremendous rifle-fire broke out all along the valley beyond the stream. It made one's pulses beat with excitement. The 2nd Army Corps was fighting hard in the valley at our feet, and Smith-Dorrien was down in the valley with his men.

When the devil's din was at its loudest, another powerful limousine coming from the rear pulled up opposite us. "Go on, go on," shouted a voice from the inside, and the car again sped on. Inside was Field-Marshal Sir John French poring over a map held out with both hands over his knees.

His car also disappeared into the valley, and we again surmised that there must be some big thing going on down below to draw thither Field-Marshal, Corps Commanders, and Divisional Generals.

AN hour elapsed. All of the batteries except one had ceased fire, the cracking of our rifles was still heavy but more distant, and now two cars were seen coming slowly towards us from out the valley. In the front car were French and Smith-Dorrien. We augured that all was well, for the car was proceeding slowly, and the Field-Marshal was placidly smoking a cigar. Our augury was correct. We had forced the passage of the Marne, and were grimly in pursuit of the retreating foe.





Graphic Photo Union and Central Press

VICTORY AND ITS PRICE

When the German Army was rolled back across the Marne by the French and British armies the retreat was so hasty that an immense number of guns besides other equipment was cast aside by the fleeing invaders. A long row of German field guns, such as that above, was a heartening sight to our fighting men. But the British officer's grave, left, on the field of the Marne, with its rough cross, is a sad reminder of the price of victory.

THE GUNS ARE SILENCED

While the guns were collected by the advancing armies, many to be sent to Paris and London as early trophies of war, the limbers attached were left on the field. Right, is a field where a German battery had made its last stand. The limbers, now useless, stand where they had been when the guns were served. Scattered around them are the wicker cases in which the shells had been packed. This photograph was taken after the action at Montreuil-aux-Lions during the German retreat from the Marne.



AERIAL ADVENTURE on AISNE and MARNE

by Lieut.-Col. L. A. Strange, D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C.

IN this chapter Col. Strange gives a magnificently vivid account of aerial adventure during the British advance to the Aisne. As a young man before the war he took part in several pioneer flights, including the historic race to Manchester. He was amongst the first to fly to France in August 1914, and saw much early air fighting



Barratts

AIR FIGHTER OF 1914

At the beginning of the war aerial reconnaissance was carried out by intrepid young pilots, such as Colonel Strange was then. He served continuously from 1914 to 1919, earning some of the most coveted decorations of the Great War.

GENERAL JOFFRE had taken the offensive; the Anglo-French forces were advancing. Instead of moving back day by day, there was every prospect that we might soon be occupying aerodromes we had been forced to abandon. The sudden changes involved by the movements of the armies in the field seemed as likely to prove embarrassing to us when our men were advancing as when they were retreating.

On September 11, for instance, I made six flights with Lieut. Rabagliati as my passenger, after which I landed to report to the Corps headquarters. Unfortunately this had been shifted from the locality where I had received overnight instructions to make my report. Before I realized what the trouble was, we found ourselves surrounded at a respectable distance by a regiment of Zouaves.

The next five minutes might have been amusing to an onlooker, but I cannot say I found them so. I was not at all sure of the nationality of these troops, and evidently they had decided to take no risks about mine. Half a dozen rifle bullets whizzed round our ears. Then a little old French officer on a white pony galloped up to our field and stopped the shooting. I had not put my engine off, but kept it going with the switches, and every time I switched on to keep it running, rifles all round the field went up to the "present." The French officer remained about two hundred yards away from us, where he did his best to keep his restive pony quiet; whenever the animal gave him a moment's leisure, he waved a white handkerchief frantically up and down.

Whether this was a token of surrender or an incitement to us to give ourselves up quietly or merely the anticipation of a fond farewell, I could not gather, but we thought it best to humour him by returning the compliment. I had, however, decided that I could not afford to waste the time involved in giving him a



ENEMY OR ALLY?—THEY TOOK NO CHANCE

In the first few months of the war both aircraft and anti-aircraft defences were in their infancy, and one of the greatest difficulties the defenders met with was to distinguish between enemy and friendly aircraft. This photograph shows French sharpshooters on the look out for enemy aeroplanes, and Col. Strange relates in this chapter how they sometimes gave a very hot time to Allied airmen. In this photograph an aeroplane has just been sighted, and inability to spot the distinguishing signs may make it awkward for the pilot.

satisfactory explanation of our identity; I therefore opened up the engine and headed the machine in the direction of the ancient sportsman, thinking that if the soldiers started to shoot at me again while I was taking off, the nearer to their officer I was the fewer risks I should run.

THE pony took fright at what it very naturally thought to be an uncouth monster. It bolted, and the officer fell off. The foremost Zouaves rushed forward to pick up and save their officer; those behind them thought discretion the better part of valour and rushed





FIRST FLIGHT OF BRITAIN'S AERIAL ARMY

Above, the first British army pilot to land in France with his machine, a B.E.2C. He was Major H. Harvey Kelly, D.S.O., Royal Irish Regiment, attached Royal Flying Corps. He is seen by the haystack studying a map just before he left for France, where he landed at Amiens. The top photograph shows a Farman biplane on reconnaissance duty in 1914. The R.F.C. gained high praise from Joffre for its work in the early days of the war.

Imperial War Museum

away to save themselves. Consequently my Henri Farman took off between the flustered old gentleman on the ground and his bolting pony; amid much excitement and a few odd rifle shots, we waved a last farewell and dived behind a convenient wood, where we flew low until we were out of range before circling up to watch the party disperse from a safer height.

The next day I had to take my orders direct from the G.S.O.1, of the Sixth Division, my duties being rather to ascertain the positions of our own troops than to locate the enemy. On this work I made nine landings in odd fields up and down the line and finished the day by taking Capt. Furse on a reconnaissance. Late that evening we dropped five bombs on a large German bivouac north of Soissons, which attention the Huns reciprocated by shooting away a king post.

I noticed a few bullet holes in the planes, but did not think my Henri Farman had sustained any serious damage. We judged that we should just have time to land at Army Headquarters at Villemontoire with the reconnaissance report. We landed all right —at least, as far as we ourselves were concerned—but the king post collapsed and let down the extension on the top plane. That meant a night away from the other machines, which had meanwhile moved to Fère-en-Tardenois.

And what a night it was! As there was a strong wind blowing, I got No. 341 close up on the lee side of some ricks, but she had not been there long before a shell landed bang on top of the endmost rick to our right and set it on fire. There was a fine blaze, but the wind blew the flames away from the other ricks; unfortunately the one that was on fire gave the Hun gunners a nice target for further shooting practice.

AN old French farmer came out from an adjacent farmhouse and began to talk volubly; from what I could gather, he seemed to be as much excited about the war of 1870 as the present one. His farm had been in German occupation a few days previously; neither his wife nor his daughter had been molested by the soldiers, but he was very much concerned for his ricks, as well as for the safety of his two sons, who were fighting somewhere in the Vosges. His greatest trouble, however, was that the Germans had commandeered his best farm horses and driven them somewhere across the Aisne, but he informed me that he hoped to fetch them back in a day or two. I thought him somewhat of an optimist, but dreamed as little as he did that the "day or two" would lengthen out into a period of over four years.

The old fellow took me back to his farm, where he showed me with great pride about a hundred sacks of flour that he had annexed from some lorries abandoned by the roadside close by. After giving me some hot coffee and bread and butter, he offered me a bed for the night, but I suspected that I might find it full of unpleasant bedfellows and so declined, saying that I would have to camp out by my machine. It was well I did so, for the wind

developed into a gale, with the result that I spent the night devising all sorts of schemes to prevent No. 341 being blown over. First I discovered a long ladder leaning against one of the ricks, and laid it across my machine's skids. When I found this insufficient I spent the best part of an hour carrying large paving stones from the main road about a quarter of a mile away and laying them on the ladder to weigh it down. As the wind still increased in force, I plaited ropes from the straw in the ricks and tied the struts down to the ends of the ladder; this seemed to do the trick, and as the storm abated in the small hours of the morning, I climbed up on a rick, burrowed out a cosy hole and slept.

I was roused by the sound of voices, and awoke to find a fierce argument going on between the farmer (who emphasized the points of his remarks with a long single-bore sporting gun) and what at first sight appeared to my sleepy eyes to be two sailors. They had leather top boots, with trousers tucked inside them, and woollen sweaters, and so I did not realize for the moment that they were Germans.

The old farmer explained to me that he had caught them prowling round his farm—probably in search of food—and apologized to me for not having shot them at once but he had no cartridges for his gun. The Germans naturally did not know that his weapon was harmless, and therefore sought the protection they hoped to obtain by surrendering to any soldiers they might find in the vicinity of the aeroplane.

My appearance was a great relief to all parties, because the Germans thought they were going to be shot, while the farmer imagined they would make off in my aeroplane. I am afraid I disappointed the old chap by not shooting them, and even raised doubts in his mind about my own nationality when I offered them cigarettes. Eventually I handed them over to some British troops that happened to pass along the road.

WHIRLED ABOUT LIKE PAPER

Soon afterwards a tender arrived with a new king post for No. 341. From its driver I learnt of the havoc wrought on our precious machines by the great gale in that night of September 13, 1914. Aeroplanes had been hurled across the aerodrome like bits of paper, while one Henri Farman was caught by a gust of wind which lifted it forty feet into the air and then smashed it down bang on top of another. When I flew back to Fère-en-Tardenois I found the aerodrome strewn with smashed machines that had been wrecked by the storm that night, and I believe that barely ten were fit to fly the following morning.

Fère-en-Tardenois was the first aerodrome where the R.F.C. spent more than two or three successive nights; I think we stayed about three weeks there while the battle of the Aisne was being fought. Looking up the diary I kept at the time, I see that its entries for that period stress the monotony of continually flying over the same ground, but, of course, we had then no conception of the trench warfare that was to stabilize the positions of the opposing armies for so many years.

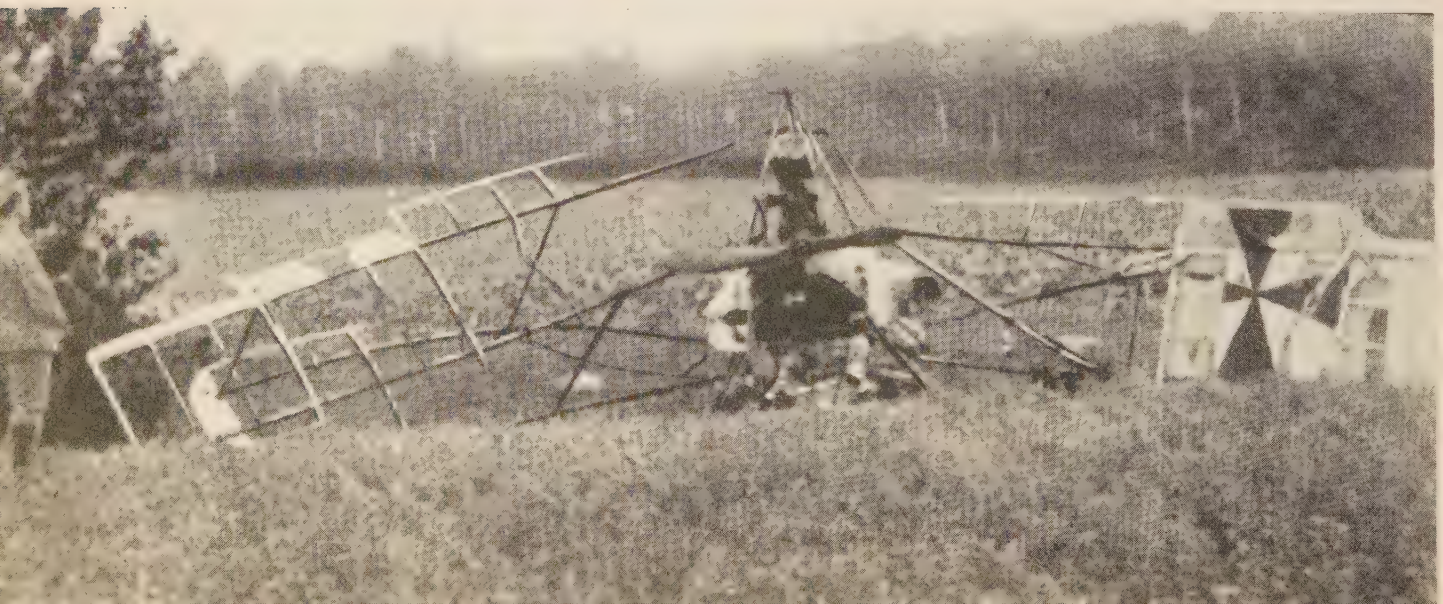
I did a lot of artillery observation work in those days, my observer generally being Capt. Furse, who always used to do two shoots a day with his own battery. One day I came to the conclusion that anti-aircraft gunfire was getting hotter and hotter, but was pleased when I found that General Pulteney, commanding the 3rd Corps, was also aware of the fact, for he sent us a nice little message, expressing his admiration of the way we stuck it. We felt very heroic, of course, but imagine my disgust one day when I landed among some French troops and was informed by their anti-aircraft gunners that my observer and I were their prisoners, whom they had shot down after firing seventy-seven rounds. I think it was only equalled by theirs when they discovered the mistake they had made, and as both sides expressed their feelings in forceful language, the incident came near to starting a private war between the allies.

Although the battle of the Aisne seemed monotonous to us after the German retreat ended, it was really teeming with interest, as from the air we had the unique opportunity to watch the proceedings going on behind both sides of the firing line. Column after column of troops was hurried up to the front to be thrown into the long line that stretched away to westward, but we could only admire the skilled work of the French, who bent this line a little bit more towards the north every day in order to prevent the Germans assuming positions which would have endangered our contact with our allies. At last, the opposing forces settled down along a line stretching nearly north and south, as everyone will remember from the maps that used to appear in the papers.

THE IRON CROSS CRASHES TO EARTH

The wings of German aeroplanes were marked on the underside with a black Iron Cross, so that they could be identified by their own gunners. Here on an open field, ringed with trees touched by the gold of autumn, is the bare skeleton of a German aeroplane brought down in flames between the Marne and the Aisne on September 11, 1914. A "post-mortem" on such a machine as this proved that Britain had at that time little to learn from Germany in aeronautical engineering.

Imperial War Museum



HOW SOISSONS SUFFERED — DEVASTATION, DEATH AND RECOVERY



TAKEN and retaken by Germans and French several times during the war, Soissons suffered not only at the hands of foes but of friends. In page 117 the town is seen from a distance much as it is today, all wartime ravages gone. Those in this page give some idea of the terrible devastation and subsequent restoration. Right, is the shattered tower of the cathedral as it was in 1914, and, left, as it is today, restored to its old-time graceful symmetry.

Below, is a street scene in the town in 1914, with an African Chasseur, two Turcos and three British soldiers standing in front of a building that suffered in the first bombardment of September 12 and 13. The bottom photograph shows a scene in Soissons, also in 1914, with houses wrecked and dead horses lying in the street.

E.N.A. and Central News







DEATH CALLED MY COMRADES

Holocaust in a Wood on the Aisne

by Corporal John Lucy

WHEN the British reached the Aisne they crossed the river at several points and fierce battles ensued. Corporal (now Captain) Lucy, who in page 60 gave a vivid description of the battle of Mons, endured the hardships of the Retreat and was amongst the first to come into action on the Aisne. With a magnificent command of detail he relates, incident by incident, his experiences of a day of bloody fighting and records with simple dignity the loss of his brother of the same Irish battalion

OUR advance continued steadily as the Germans were driven back from the Marne. Their rearguards showed some resistance every day, and occasionally we picked up stragglers and wounded from the enemy army. Although we took our turn in our brigade at advanced guard and outpost duties, our battalion did not really cross swords with the enemy again until September 14. On that day, and on the few days preceding it, rain fell, and we were not very comfortable either in bivouac or on the line of march. The weather began to get cold.

On the evening of September 13 a British aeroplane, one of the few the British Army possessed, approached us from the German side, and, wheeling around, alighted in a field to the right of our marching columns. The flying officer climbed slowly out of his heavy kit, did not wait to find an officer, but shouted to us all: "There they are, waiting for you up there, thousands of them." And he waved his right arm towards the wooded heights, across the river Aisne, some three miles away. Then he composed himself, and asked for the nearest battalion commander. We showed him the riding figure of our colonel at the head of our unit.

But we did not fight that day. We went into bivouac on the south side of the river and had a meal before resting for the night.

Early next morning a battery of our field-guns came into action near our bivouac. They were camouflaged with green branches of trees, and appeared to be firing across the river at some target in the woods on the other side.

The tone of the orders given us, the close inspection of our ammunition, and our rapid fall-in showed that there was immediate work ahead. We marched on quickly down the sloping south side of the river valley to the river Aisne, passing close to other guns in action, and making way for the ammunition wagons which were feeding the batteries.

It was a fine fresh morning, and we moved on, exhilarated by a feeling of the unexpected, down a wet leafy lane, until we came to an open space between the woods and the southern bank of the river, where we made our first deployment.

We gripped our rifles hard. We felt on the edge of a fresh battlefield, with



WELCOME BARK OF THE GUNS

To the men in the front line no sound was more heartening than the whizz of the shells from their own guns flying over their heads towards the foe. Above is the battery of field guns, camouflaged with branches of trees, which did its "strafe" every morning near Corporal Lucy's bivouac. Below is a similar battery drawn by heavy draught horses moving into action, and that, too, will soon be pounding the German line.



the curtain about to go up, and looked all about our front for the direction of the first threat of danger.

Our shells swished close overhead on their way to the dominating heights on the far bank, and presently enemy shrapnel whipped and cracked above us. A curse or two expressed the nausea which every man with a stomach experiences when he feels helpless under a rain of slivers of steel and bullets hurled at him by an enemy two miles or so out of rifle shot.

My company turned right on gaining the river and moved section by section in single file east along the river bank, and from time to time we halted a moment to crouch or lie flat behind tussocks of grass lining the bank, as the enemy shell-fire increased. We were

making for the railway bridge east of Vailly, which at that moment was being recrossed by an English regiment retiring out of action from the northern side of the river. The bridge had been blown up by the Germans, and was now under steady observed shrapnel fire—rather heavy stuff, too, judging by the sounds of the bursts and the dense rolling clouds above and about it.

As we approached the bridge we saw that it was completely wrecked; a tangled mass of ironwork, most of which was submerged, with a dead horse held against it by the current, and only a line of single planks, which sagged in the middle, as a means of getting over. This line of single planks was hastily and precariously rigged against what was left of the iron supports of the railway bridge. A nasty proposition.

We did not wait to contemplate it. A fresh English regiment crossed over as we drew nearer, and we "blondined" across it, section by section, close under the bursting shells. No casualties occurred near me but shouts of alarm from behind showed that the following company had caught it. We did not turn to see. We heard that some of those hit had fallen into the river. Our commanding officer, with his usual bravery, stood upon a height on the south bank, just close to the bridge, during the whole time taken by his battalion to cross.

On gaining the other side we found the regiment which had preceded us disappearing towards our right front as it worked up the hill through the trees and undergrowth. We deployed rapidly into attack formations. A shrapnel bullet penetrated my haversack and tore into the middle of a folded towel inside it. I felt startled and angry at the tug it gave and at my narrow escape, and pushed on with the others. The Germans had seen us cross over, and were now firing salvos at us. Our company commander was hit in the arm.

Two or three other officers of the following companies were also hit and a good many men were knocked out, but we did not miss them in the excitement. We went on steadily uphill, seeing nothing of the enemy. We had hardly cleared the shelled area near the bridge when bullets began whistling about us. We must have been within a couple of hundred yards of enemy riflemen, but though we looked hard through the undergrowth we could not see them. We cursed them, and relying on the luck of soldiers we bowed our heads a little, shut our jaws and went stubbornly on. Quicker we went, on to our toes and crouching lower. In for a penny, in for a pound, quicker and quicker to get it over. Their rifles cracked sharply now, and the whistle and whine of bullets passing wide changed to the startling bangs of bullets just missing one. The near rattle of machine-guns sent our hearts thumping, until we sounded them on the front of the English on our right. They were getting it hotter. The rifle-fire in front ceased gradually, and we pushed on harder still.

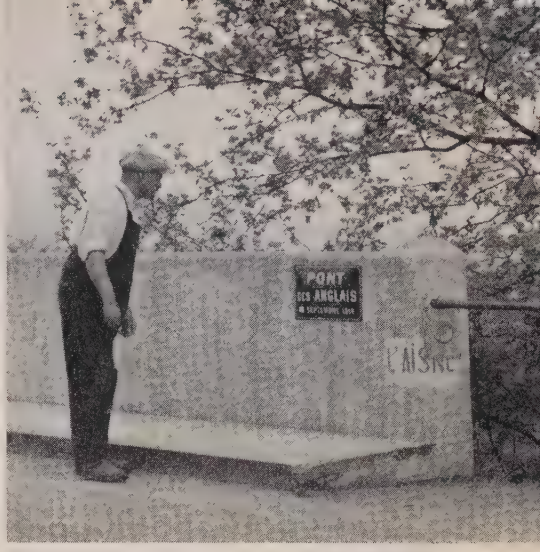
Our own shells were now bursting a short distance ahead, just beyond a crest line clearly visible to us. This line marked the near edge of a large plateau, and as we made it in a last rush we found this plateau edge forming a small continuous cliff of chalk varying from two to four feet high, giving good protection from bullets and fair cover from shell-fire. Automatically we halted here, and our officers ordered us to improve the position by digging.

We missed some of our number when we had a look round after taking a breather. They had fallen quietly in battle, almost unnoticed, for in the attack the dead and wounded are soon out of sight behind. On the whole the enemy riflemen had been rotten shots . . .

Our company had been forward in the attack which gained the plateau, and was now called into reserve. Another company took our place in the front, and we went underground into conveniently situated large caves, a little distance in rear of the line. The medical officer had opened up his dressing station at the mouth of one cave, and was already busy attending to the wounded and the dead. He went along the line of those who had been hit, and his preliminary test for life in each lying figure seemed to be a pinch under the jaw. Those he found to be dead he ordered to be taken out into the open, and waved the most dangerously wounded towards his assistants for immediate attention. He wasted no words.

We had hardly entered the caves when the Germans counter-attacked, and we were at once ordered to stand up and fall in ready to go to help our people outside. The sound of the battle heard from the caves was awe-inspring. Clouds of smoke from bursting shells obscured the already dim light which filtered through the cave mouth. Heavy shells crumpled into the earth roof of our shelter and shook us.

Projectiles whined and crashed at varying distances, and machine-guns rat-tat-tatted. The indistinct figures of stretcher-bearers collecting dead and wounded moved unceasingly in the cloudy light of the cave mouth. We felt trapped, and wished ourselves outside fighting, instead of standing restless in the semi-darkness.





FRENCH TRIBUTE TO BRITISH VALOUR

The British Army showed indomitable valour during the crossing of the Aisne. The bridge, across a gap in which Corporal Lucy and his comrades passed on September 13, 1914, on a single line of planks under fire, has now been rebuilt. The gallant deed has been commemorated by a plaque (top photograph) bearing the words "Pont des Anglais, 13 Septembre 1914." Below, the bridge as it is today spanning the tranquil waters of the Aisne.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

The appalling noise of the conflict outside made us all very anxious as to the progress of the enemy counter-attack. We got nervy and fidgeted and avoided each other's eyes. One interested soldier at the cave mouth morbidly occupied himself by passing in the names of the latest dead and wounded. I did not want to hear them, and though I listened with strained ears my mind could not cope with the situation. Each fresh name bludgeoned my brain.

I HAD hardly envisaged one strong man lifeless and gone when another name followed. The casualties appeared to be very numerous. A great sense of misery and loss began to possess me as the litany of familiar names continued, and I moved over to my brother's platoon to be near him. He appeared to be absolutely calm, and his bearing had the effect of putting me at ease, so I went back to my own section very soon.

The German attack ceased. It had been beaten back with heavy loss, and all became quiet again. On examination we found that the casualties were not at all as bad as we had thought . . . .

We were now to learn a bitter lesson.

We were ordered to fall in outside the caves, and out we went, shying a bit at the sight of blood-dripping stretchers propped against the wall of the cave mouth. Outside we saw some of our dead lying in grotesque positions.

A few of these had previously cut their long trousers into shorts during the hot August weather, and now they looked like slain schoolboys. This impression was enhanced by the peaceful and youthful looks on their dead faces. A hollow in the ground about ten yards from the caves was filled with bandaged wounded, with whom we conversed. They did not seem very much distressed ; one or two groaned in low voices, others had dilated pupils, and looked surprised in a rather silly fashion, wondering about their wounds, I supposed, while a few unimpressed ones smoked philosophically.

I was looking keenly at this picture of our wounded, and thinking how good and brave they were, and also envying those with slight wounds who would go away back to England, or, with luck, to Ireland, when the scene suddenly changed. A rising tearing noise like that of an approaching train heralded the arrival of a heavy shell. Nearer and nearer it came and we all crouched down where we were. The wounded squirmed lower down in their hollow.

We closed our teeth to the shattering burst, which seemed right on top of us, and then after a pause and a deep breath I slowly raised my head to see that the shell had exploded precisely over the hollow and killed every one of the wounded.

"Lead on, 'A' Company," and we moved forward to the front line in answer to the order, glad to get off at once from the immediate scene of that awful tragedy. We halted on familiar ground, under cover of the little cliff of chalk which we had manned yesterday.

An occasional shell burst behind us in the woods, and some very large ones were sighing over our heads, high up, on their way to Vailly a mile below us on the river bank. Just as we came to the little cliff, the officer commanding a company on our right came striding towards us, a tall, gaunt captain with the light of battle in his eye. A very religious man he was, too, always talking about duty, and a great Bible reader. Tall, sinewy, with pale face and pale-blue eyes, colourless hair, and a large, untidy, colourless moustache, he came at us looking for blood. He reminded me of a grisly Don Quixote.

DON QUIXOTE ATTACKS

"THEY have gone," he cried jubilantly and with certainty, in a cracked voice. "All the Germans have gone away, except about one platoon, which I have located in that wood to our left front. I intend to capture that enemy platoon with my company, but I want volunteers from 'A' company to move across the open to support me, while I work forward through the wood, which enters the left of my company line. Now, who will volunteer ?"

I suppose he knew very well that the native pride of Irish troops could be depended on. Anyway, the whole of "A" Company immediately volunteered to assist. The officer selected the two nearest platoons, which happened to be mine and my brother's. He then sent Muldoon, one of my platoon, up a tree to look across the plateau at the wood, in order to confirm the presence of the enemy for our edification. "Mul," as we called him, shinned up, and presently shouted down : "Yes, there they are, I can see them in the woods."

"GOOD," said the officer. "'A' Company's two platoons will move forward in line from here, keeping parallel to the right edge of the wood, as soon as my company gets going," and Don Quixote went off rapidly to launch his attack. A rifle shot aimed at "Mul" cut short that lad's curiosity, and he slid grinning and safe to the ground. We fixed our bayonets, as the enemy were close, and sorted ourselves by sections along the plateau edge, searching for easy places to surmount so as to get on to the level of the plateau.

It cannot be said that the operation was very well organized. It was all too rapid, and we got no definite objective, our task being to engage any enemy on our front by advancing to find him and attack him. My brother's platoon suddenly got the order, unheard by me, and up went the

BACK TO THE LIFE OF CAVEMEN

In this chapter Corporal John Lucy tells how the caves in the high ground through which the Aisne flows were used as dug-outs. They also served as dressing stations and regimental headquarters, as in this photograph. In all of them the troops went back to the life of cavemen and found in nature's handiwork shell-proof quarters far better than anything that man could build.

From "Mons to Ypres with French," by F. Coleman



men on to the open grassland, led by their officer. Denis went ahead, abreast with this officer, too far in front of his section, I thought. He carried his rifle with the bayonet fixed threateningly at the high port, and presented a good picture of the young leader going into battle.

Not quite necessary for a lance-corporal. He was exposing himself unnecessarily and would be one of the first to be shot at. I raised myself high over the parapet of our cliff, and shouted to him: "Take care of yourself," and I blushed at such a display of anxiety in the presence of my comrades. My brother steadied a moment in a stride which was beginning to break into a steady run forward, and looking back over his shoulder winked reassuringly at me. The beggar would wink.

FORWARD he went, and out of my sight for ever. I had to forget him then, because Lieutenant Waters drew his sword and signalled us. We rose from cover and doubled forward over the grass to the right of my brother's platoon. There was an uncanny silence. We could see fairly level wooded country



L.N.A. and Sport and General

SINISTER BIRDS MAKE THEIR NEST IN THE ROOF

Hidden machine guns ferociously spitting death at the attacking troops inflicted terrible slaughter on all the armies from the beginning to the end of the war. The incident described by Corporal John Lucy is illustrated by these two photographs. Above, German machine gunners are hoisting their ugly weapon to its eyrie in the roof, while below, it is in position waiting to mow down its human targets.



and some cottages to our immediate front, backed by more broken landscape. With a sinking heart I realized that our extended line made an excellent target, as we topped a slight rise, and went on fully exposed across flat country without the slightest cover. The Germans were waiting for us, holding fire.

As we cleared the crest a murderous hail of missiles raked us from an invisible enemy. The line staggered under this smash of machine-gun, rifle and shell-fire, and I would say that fully half our men fell over forward on to their faces, either killed or wounded.

Some turned over on to their backs, and others churned about convulsively. With hot throats the remainder of us went on, as there is no halt in the attack without an order.

THE wood on our left, through which the other company was advancing, seemed on fire, as it sparkled with bursting enemy shells, and then became almost hidden under a pall of rolling smoke. The wood was a shell-trap, and the company had "bought it," as the troops curtly say. More men fell, but my section still went strongly. Two men of the nearest section to our left fell, and both immediately sat up and began to tear open their First Field Dressings. They had been hit low, in the legs. A bullet ripped through the sole of my right boot as I ran on and jerked my own leg aside. For the next few paces I kept stamping my right

foot on the ground, testing it, and half expecting to see blood spurt from the lace holes. This low fire was a bloody business, and most efficient—the kind of stuff we were taught ourselves. I believe I was now beginning to get really afraid of these Germans.

The high rate of concentrated fire continued, and the men were now advancing in a very thin line, with most of their number scattered on the grass behind. No officer remained. A sergeant on the left shouted and the men nearest him got down into the prone position. We followed suit and hastily threw ourselves flat on the grass. Hardly had we done so when a machine-gun raked the whole line, a weak and feeble line now, and shot accurately home into it.

Some of the lying men flapped about; others, shot through the head, jerked their faces forward rapidly and lay still. I trembled with fear and horror.

THIS was a holocaust. The relentless spray of the deadly machine-gun traversed back along the line from the left towards us. The Catholic soldiers blessed themselves in a final act of resignation. But the curve of the traverse came luckily short as it swept across my section, and it traced the ground in front. Little spurts of earth showed the strike of each group of bullets, a few yards before our faces.

This was more perilous than shots going over our heads, because the bullets ricochetted, shrieking like some infernal cat-fight all about us, but it was better than being hit direct. By lucky chance or instinct I saw the enemy machine-gun. There it was, mounted daringly on the roof of a cottage, close to the left side of a chimney, about six hundred yards away, and directly to my front. With all my strength I shrieked the range, described the target, and ordered five rounds rapid fire. There was a heartening response as we opened fire at the first and only target we had seen in this terrible attack.

In about four seconds some thirty bullets were whistling about that dark spot near the chimney as we slammed in our rapid fire, glad to have work to do, and gloriously, insanely, and incredibly the German gun stopped firing, and then it disappeared as it was quickly withdrawn behind the roof.

"Fire at the roof below the ridge of the house, about three feet down," I ordered exultantly, and I could have whooped for joy, I was now commanding effectively. Damn the rest of the enemy fire. Their rifle-fire was always poor, anyway, and blow the shells. They might hit you and they might not. There was none of the deadly accuracy of the machine-gun in these other weapons of the enemy. I breathed a long breath of relief and looked about.

I looked right and left at my section to see that all were firing. Bugler Tymble had been wounded in the right arm, and having discarded his equipment, was moving away back. The others on the left were firing well and steadily. On my right, the nearest figure lay still with his face in the grass. I roared: "Are you hit?" and he raised his head to show a grinning face. I got angry and shouted at the scrimshanker: "Why the hell don't you fire?" and the man began to laugh. I did not know him well. He had arrived with the first reinforcement only about ten days before. He laughed and laughed and dug his face back in the grass. It was no grim joke, as I then suspected. The man was hysterical with fear. I did not know hysteria, and could not understand him.

Some wounded had bandaged themselves and had continued to fight. The sight of them made me madder, and I edged towards the laugher, swearing at him, and I struck him twice in the ribs with my rifle butt. That steadied him, though his grin turned to a look of terror. I threatened him with a court-martial, and told him to pull his socks up. This sounded damn silly in the circumstances, even to myself, so I crept back to my central position to supervise the actions of more useful men.

THEIR SWORDS KILLED THEM

MULDOON rose some yards to my left with his face covered in blood, which poured down on to his jacket and equipment. He had been shot through the top of the head. He came to me and asked for the platoon sergeant. I said "What for? Go back," and he said, "No, got to report first." And report he did, going down that awful line, under heavy fire, spurred by a most soldierly but ridiculous conscience to ask permission to fall out. He got back safe, with a peculiar wound, not at all fatal, for the bullet had hit him near the top of the head and passed under his scalp and out at the back, without injuring his skull. . . .

We were still in great jeopardy, losing men every moment. Nine officers of the two companies—all we had—were knocked out. They fell forward in the advance waving their naked swords.

The Germans, aided by the flashes of these out-of-date weapons, had concentrated their fire with success on our leaders. Two officers had been killed and seven wounded. From this date swords went out of fashion. Our attack had been a fiasco.

Without officers, and sorely stricken, we still held on, until a sergeant waved us back, so we rose and returned to where we had started, exhausted and disappointed. Some of the men walked back to Vailly. The Germans followed up our short retreat with shells, and worried us with more casualties among the few survivors. This was very harassing, almost the last straw. Our casualties had already amounted to one hundred and fifty, more than half the strength of the two unfortunate companies.

A sliver of shell hit the hysterical laugher of the front line and sent him all diddery. It struck him in the foot, and completely out of control he rushed limping for sympathy to me, shouting: "Oh, oh, Corporal, what shall I do?" Some one seized him, disarmed him, took off his boots, and led him away, still groaning: "Oh, Corporal, Corporal, Corporal." My vials of sympathy were emptied, and I was glad to see the last of him.

A YOUNG Cork man named Lane came smiling towards me, with his arm in a sling. He was of my brother's platoon. I asked him about Denis, and he gave me the glad news that he, too, was slightly wounded in the arm, and had gone down to the village of Vailly with some other wounded. I was pleased and relieved.

The next few minutes reminded me of Butler's picture of the Crimean roll-call, when the senior N.C.O.s listed our casualties from information given by the survivors: "08 Corrigan?" "Dead, Sergeant." "I saw him too." "Right, killed in action. Any one seen 23 Murphy?" No answer. "Right, missing." "What about MacRory? Anyone see MacRory coming back after he was hit?" No answer. "Right, wounded and missing," and the sergeant's stubby pencil scribbled on. The depleted company moved back the short distance to reserve and grouped in little parties to discuss their experiences. I left them, to seek the orderly-room clerk, who verified that my brother's name had been submitted in the list of wounded of his platoon.

The clerk would not tell me the total casualties. He had been forbidden to speak about them.

Actually my brother was lying dead out in front, about three hundred yards away, all this time, and I did not get to know this for days. Only one man of his section had come back alive.

That I did not know either. After some days this survivor told me that my brother was killed with the rest of the section by shell-fire. He also

confirmed that he had been wounded first. Volunteers from other companies were called for, and these went out, when darkness fell, to bring in the wounded. They worked all night and suffered casualties themselves.

THE company on the left had got a bad hammering. Their wood was now a shambles of wrecked trees and human bodies. Men had fallen in heaps under the intense shell concentration, yet the stout fellows had pushed on, and actually entered and captured a German trench, and brought back several enemy prisoners, among whom were some gunner observers.

These gunners had a knob instead of a spike on the top of their helmets [see the photograph in this page]. The strange enemy field-grey uniforms made some of us feel bitter, but as we continued to look at them cold reason told us that they were only troops like ourselves, and not so straight-backed either. They looked pale and scared.





GERMAN HOWITZERS, THEN AND NOW

In the first two years of the war the German artillery, except for guns of small calibre, was immensely superior to that of the Allies, and since then has developed apace, though not more rapidly than that of other Powers. Here are German guns, then and now. In the upper photograph are German howitzers in 1914, now little more than museum pieces, while below are German howitzers of today photographed during the manoeuvres of 1938, when Herr Hitler saw a display of Germany's latest achievements in rearmament.

The warlike commander of the left company, bleeding from several wounds in various parts of his body, and looking more fanatical than ever, would not have any of his hurts dressed until he had interrogated his prisoners. He questioned them in German, and was removed from them with difficulty and made to lie on a stretcher.

Some of our wounded lying out did not wait for rescue. They crawled and hobbled in of their own accord. One man presented a wild appearance, coming in half naked. He had been peppered with shrapnel, and had stripped himself under fire out there to look at his wounds. A man is always urgently curious about his wounds. Blotches of blood showed up startlingly on the white body of this half-naked fellow, who was a man who had knocked me out with bare fists in what already seemed the far-off days of peace. A ghastly sight, and he was simply full of abuse. He cursed us for not trying harder, and told us we had disgraced ourselves. A hardy fighter indeed, but we had had our bellyful, and were in no mood to listen to his recriminations.

HE was soundly cursed at in turn, and left us with a bitter twist on his thin lips, still reviling us with the vituperation of Belfast's back streets, while his red hands wandered unconsciously from wound to wound.

He repelled us, and as he looked strong on his legs we left him to his own devices.

An inquisitive corporal from one of the companies that had remained behind approached one Cordwain, asking him what the attack was like and the strength of the opposition we met with.

"Hell's bells!" said tall Cordwain, as he remembered the intensity and variety of fire we had endured. "We met the whole of Von Kluck's lousy army, and the bloody German navy as well."

And he spat reflectively over the hot muzzle of his rifle.

DEVIL'S ORCHESTRA–

Personally Conducted on the Aisne

by A. A. Martin, M.C., Ch.B.

THE author, who as an officer of the Field Ambulance 5th Division described (in page 133) the crossing of the Marne, here continues his enthralling narrative in the bloody shambles of the Aisne. His hero in this chapter is a gallant Roman Catholic padre who worked hour after hour amongst the wounded, under heavy shell fire, oblivious of all danger and bringing consolation to men in their death agonies

THE ancient château-farm of Mont de Soissons was our headquarters during September and till the date we left in October 1914, and it was during this eventful period that all the great stirring events "on the Aisne" took place. "On the Aisne": how much of tragedy and pathos, of great deeds, of gallant deaths, stubborn fighting, and indomitable courage are associated with those words?

On the night after our arrival at Mont de Soissons, the ambulance officers were sitting about eleven o'clock round a table in the old dining-room of the château, when an urgent order arrived from headquarters to send doctors, stretcher-bearers and ambulance wagons with equipment to Missy. The orders were for the ambulances to get to Missy in the dark, pick up the wounded, and at all costs to come out again in the dark. To get to Missy, which was situated on the far side of the Aisne, we would have to cross the river, and—reading between the lines of this definite order to get in under cover of darkness and get out again in the dark—one could see that our night ride was to be a somewhat perilous one.



MONSIGNOR'S MEDALS

In this photograph "Monsignor," the Roman Catholic chaplain who worked with Dr. Martin's Field Ambulance, and whose bravery and self-sacrifice he praises so highly, is seen distributing religious medals to Belgian soldiers. They were no doubt doubly acceptable when received from one whom Dr. Martin says was himself "the bravest of the brave."

From Dr. Martin's "Surgeon in Khaki"

Section C, the section to which I was attached, was ordered to undertake the task, and at twelve o'clock, on a pitch-dark rainy night, our section was ready to move off. We had five wagons, with the complete *personnel* of one section. Major B—— was in command, with Lieutenant I—— and myself as the other medical officers, and with us Monsignor, the Catholic chaplain attached to our field ambulance, also came as a volunteer. Monsignor was the salt of the earth, and whenever he thought that he could be of service to our wounded men he was there. Behind the priest there was more than a *soupçon* of the knight-errant, who warmed at the thought of a dangerous adventure.

MISFORTUNE dogged us from the start. We had but one map; and as nobody could give us any directions, that was our only guide. We mapped out the route: Mont de Soissons to Serches—Serches to Venizel on the banks of the Aisne, where was the bridge by which we were to cross the river; Venizel to Bucy le Long, and thence to Missy. Altogether, we reckoned that we had seven or eight miles at least to go; but it proved to be a "long, long way to Tipperary."

After being five minutes on the march we discovered that we were on the wrong road, and it took twenty minutes to turn the wagons on the narrow, muddy *pavé* and get on again. Passing through Serches, we turned to the left and followed the road through a valley leading to the banks of the Aisne. Here again we were nearly off on a wrong road, and lost about another twenty minutes righting ourselves. The country was intersected with roads not indicated on our map. We now got on to a narrow road dipping sharply down towards a clump of trees, and here one of our wagons slipped over the embankment, and one of the horses was killed. We could not get the wagon up again, so abandoned it and pushed on with our remaining four wagons, water cart, and supply wagon. The loss of this wagon was a serious blow to us, as events will show.

WE reached Venizel right on the banks of the Aisne, and learned to our chagrin that the fine stone bridge had been destroyed by the German artillery that day. The engineers with superhuman energy had just about completed a pontoon bridge. We were kept waiting here for an hour. Then, one wagon at a time, we got across. The bridge was very doubtfully lit at either end by darkened lanterns, and one seemed to be very close to the swift current of the Aisne, already in flood. At the far side of the bridge our progress was again very slow for some time, as we had to meander gingerly between the trenches dug for the men who were holding the bridge-end.

Our road lay now along a flat plain, curving to the right. The night was very dark and ominously silent. Our men were forbidden to talk or smoke cigarettes, as we were approaching the enemy lines. Reaching Bucy le Long, we inquired the way from a Scottish officer who was standing near a stone well on the village street. All his men were alert and under arms and expecting an attack at any moment. The officer, speaking with the good Doric accent, indicated our way and told us to hurry on and get under cover, as Missy was very "nasty" just then and they expected a German attack.

We realized by this time that we might get into Missy in the dark, but by no possibility could we bring the

wounded out in the dark; and by the serious preparations for repelling an attack in the village street we knew that we could not get out in daylight. It looked as if we were soon to be in the thick of that most sanguinary of all forms of war—street fighting.

As the first doubtful streaks of dawn appeared we reached Missy.

The main street of the village was full of men of the Norfolks and Cheshires, all up and armed, and awaiting the Germans. There had been a very hot skirmish outside the village on the previous afternoon, and the Norfolks and Cheshires had lost heavily. It was the wounded from this mêlée that we were to get to. A cheery Norfolk sergeant directed us down a small lane to the right of the street, telling us that there were a lot of badly hit men somewhere at the bottom of the lane. The lane was too narrow to admit of our ambulances, so they were parked in front of a baker's shop and the horses were taken out. We hurried down the lane and found the wounded men.

Dawn was breaking and shafts of grey light and shadow were thrusting through the darkness. Then, like a clap of thunder, the German batteries opened up, and from that moment till nightfall we lived through one of the most hellish artillery duels that any mortal man could imagine. A tornado of shot and shell swept across that beautiful Aisne valley.

It seemed as if all the fiends of hell were let loose. The noise was deafening, ear-splitting, the bursting of the shells, the mighty upheavals of earth where the shells struck, the falling trees, falling masonry, crashing church steeples, the rolling and bounding of stones from walls struck by these titanic masses of iron travelling at lightning speed, the concussion of the air, the screeching, whisking, and sighing of the projectiles in their flight, made an awful scene of destruction and force.

Add to all this the snarling, type-writer note of the Maxims, the angry phut of the Mauser bullet as it struck a house or a gate, and the crackling roars from our Enfields—truly it was the devil's orchestra, and the devil himself was whirling the fiery baton. The steeple of the village church was struck fairly by a German shell, and with a mighty crash the stones were hurled madly on to the road down which we had but just passed, and killed one of our horses. Another shell plunged right into the old church and sent its roof in a clattering hail over the surrounding houses.

A stone house at the top of our alleyway got another shell and was levelled to the ground, killing two women who were inside. The corner of the building in which we were located was struck by a passing shell and a huge hole was ripped out of the solid masonry. Shrapnel burst over the house, in the garden in front, on the doors of the house, on the roof, and down the alley. Our red cross flag and Union Jack were badly holed with shrapnel. At the kitchen door a large piece of shell fell, sending mud and gravel against the windows and into the room.

A railway line ran past the foot of our garden, and stretching from this railway line to the banks of the Aisne in the distance was a wide grassy meadow on which some cows were grazing. A thicket of tall trees, surrounding a small farmhouse, was situated to the right of the meadow. This house was the headquarters of Count Gleichen, the commander of the 15th Brigade. The Germans evidently were aware of this fact, for the first shots they fired at break of day were at this house.



PEACE—WITH DEATH LURKING NEAR

Here is the scene at a level-crossing near Venizel, through which Dr. Martin passed. A few soldiers stand in a peaceful garden leaning over the fence just as they may have done as boys at home, a few years earlier, to watch the trains go by. But only 800 yards away, German infantry are lining the trenches, and at any moment may bring death and destruction where as yet there is unbroken peace.

Now for the story of our wounded at Missy. When we got down our alley at dawn on this eventful morning we found eighty-four grievously wounded men. In a little stone fowlhouse to the left of the alley, fourteen men were lying packed close together. There was no place to put one's foot in trying to walk over them. To the right of the alley a gate opened into a gravel yard of a fine two-storied stone house, a very old and solidly built building. The house formed three sides of a square; a beautiful flower garden with a rose pergola formed the fourth side. The gravel yard was in the centre. The lower story of this building, with the exception of the kitchen and an adjoining room, consisted of stables, granaries, saddlery rooms, and coachhouse.

Lying on the floors of the stable, kitchen, etc., were wounded men. They had all been wounded the previous evening in an attack on the enemy concealed in a wood. The wounded in the small fowlhouse were carried, under shrapnel fire, across the alley to the

big house and placed in the room adjoining the kitchen and in the saddlery room. The cooks made up a big fire and soon had hot water boiling. The three medical officers were soon rapidly at work. The first case attended to was that of a young soldier of the Norfolks who had been struck by a shell in the abdomen . . . Under chloroform we did what we could. He died painlessly four hours afterwards.

There were many bad shell wounds of the head ; one necessitating a trephining operation. One poor fellow had his tongue half blown off. The loose bit was stitched on. The compound fractures were numerous and of a very bad type, associated with much shattering of the bone. Four men died during the day, but our arrival and timely help undoubtedly saved many men. We made the poor fellows as comfortable as we could, and we were incessantly busy from the moment we entered this blood-stained place.

I personally shall never forget the sight of these poor, maimed, bleeding, dying and dead men crowded together in those outhouses, with not a soul near them to help, and I am more than thankful that I was privileged to be of service and to employ my professional skill to help them in their dire hour of need. We knew that we were in a tight corner. We expected that at any moment we would be all blown to pieces ; we did not know how we were to get these men back to our own lines.

A SPLENDID PRELATE

I MENTIONED previously that when our ambulance got orders to go to Missy, Monsignor, the Roman Catholic chaplain, volunteered to come with us. It is difficult to attempt to write of our brave Monsignor. He was the bravest of the brave. When the three medical officers were working hard with the wounded—dressing, operating, anaesthetizing—Monsignor was very busy, too. He made hot soups, hot coffee, prepared stimulating drinks, set orderlies to work to see that every man who could take nourishment got it.

This splendid prelate carried straw with his own hands and made pillows and beds for our men. He took off boots and cut off bloody coats and trousers in order to help the work of the surgeons. He rummaged in a cellar in the house and discovered a box of apples. These he cut into slices for our men.

He stood by the dying men and spoke words of cheer and comfort to the poor helpless fellows. He was absolutely reckless about himself. Exposed to shrapnel and shell fire many times during the day, he was too busy attending to the wounded to think about anything else.

Towards dusk, when our work eased off, we collected some pieces of shell which fell near him—as souvenirs. I looked at Monsignor many times during the day, and was struck with his expression of content and his happy smile. He was exalted and proud and happy to be where a good priest—and what a good priest he was !—could be of such great service. I am not a Catholic, but I honour the Church that can produce such a man as Monsignor, and I very greatly honour Monsignor.

SORRY STATE OF THE WOUNDED

As darkness came on, the hellish artillery fire quietened down and then ceased altogether. The rifle-firing continued intermittently for a little while longer and then it too ceased. We were now " up against " the last and greatest trial of all—the evacuation of our wounded. During the day some more wounded men had crawled into us, and we had now 102 men to bring back to our lines. We managed in the darkness to get two large French country carts to act as ambulances. Our four ambulance wagons were, of course, not enough, and even with the help of the country carts we could not accommodate 102 wounded men. Every man wounded in the head or arms who could walk was told off to march with our stretcher-bearers. We packed the wounded lying-down cases into the ambulance wagons and on to the country carts. Plenty of straw had previously been placed in these latter.

We were compelled to load up our wagons and carts far too heavily, but our position was a serious one ; we had to get the wounded out somehow, and we had no one to help us. Our troops had retired from Missy during the day and we were left all alone in front of the Germans and quite at the mercy of their guns.

The *via dolorosa* of our sorely wounded was on this night a very pitiable one. Exposed to rain, lying in the utmost discomfort, compelled to keep for hours a cramped position, they deserved our pity. The wounded men who had to march were also in a sorry plight. These poor fellows were not fit to march ; weak with shock, pain, and loss of blood, they ought all to have been in bed ; yet they had to march for we could not leave them behind.

At last all was ready to start. Strict orders were given against lights and cigarettes. No talking was allowed, for the Germans were just " over the way," and they are people with " long ears."

Before setting out we buried four officers and five men in a grave by the railway, near the bottom of the garden. This mournful duty over, the ambulance moved off.

This time we anticipated no delay, as we knew the road—vain hope. The night was again very dark, and a drizzle of rain was falling. We had just emerged from the silent village on the road to Bucy le Long when the inky blackness of the night was cut through by the powerful beam of a searchlight played from the German lines. The light swept slowly up and down our column in a zig-zag wave once, and then a second time, this time more slowly still. Every detail was illuminated with the brilliant glare. The light was then fixed ominously on our front wagon, which had a big red cross painted on its canvas sides. The column kept moving slowly on, but for ten minutes that sinister, baleful light played all round the first ambulance.

We all thought that our last hour had come—that after going through such a hellish day in the farmhouse at Missy we were to be finally scuppered on the muddy road. We knew that the Germans were only about 800 yards away. With strained nerves we waited, expecting them to turn a machine-gun on us.

The searchlight played up and down the column once more and then was turned in another direction. My impression is that the Germans made out the red cross on the leading wagon and so let us pass. If they wished they could have destroyed us easily. We all breathed again and continued on our way. After passing through Bucy le Long, where we again saw our soldiers, we came across some returning-empty motor lorries. We placed all our marching wounded on to these and eased off the pressure in the country carts by taking off a few men.

WE GOT THEM OUT!

At Venizel we were held up for five hours. The pontoon bridge had given way during the day under the weight of a piece of heavy French artillery. The gun had been fished out from the bottom of the Aisne with great difficulty, but the horses were drowned. The engineers were straining every nerve to repair the bridge. It was vitally important to hurry, as this bridge was the only artery of communication between our advanced troops and the ammunition supplies.

At last we got across and reached Mont de Soissons, our ambulance headquarters, at nine in the morning. The wounded were handed over to the other medical officers. Men and officers were completely done up. We had been marching during two anxious, harassing nights, and had lived through a bad day, but—we got out our wounded.



Photopress

ALWAYS WELCOME TO A SOLDIER

This smiling young Belgian priest is expressing appreciation of something he has just seen by offering a cigarette to a Highland soldier who, a few minutes before, had been "in action," firing at a German aeroplane over an Ostend street. The cigarette will be smoked later, but Tommy and Jock could never have too many. The photograph was taken outside the Marine Station at Ostend during the August occupation of Ostend and Antwerp by British troops.



A MARCH THAT BLUFFED THE FOE

With [illegible] diversion, and to mislead the Germans into thinking that a great landing of British troops was contemplated at Ostend, three battalions of the R.M.L.I. were landed there on August 27 and 28, 1941, as shown in part in the scene on the page. Some of the men are seen in the remarkable photograph marching [illegible] from the Gare Maritime, with a Union Jack proudly carried [illegible]. The majority of the men were recruits of mature years, [illegible] Britain and [illegible] Scotland. Soon after their practice march by the sea[illegible] of the Low Countries [illegible] Antwerp.





Photopress

THEY WERE GALLANT 'SOLDIERS AND SAILORS TOO'

Marines are here seen marching away from the harbour at Ostend after the landing depicted in page 170. These men, reservists like those photographed in pp. 156 and 157, formed a Brigade of the Naval Division whose gallant attempt a few weeks later to save Antwerp is described in Chapter 40. The Royal Marines, besides taking part in all the naval actions of the war, made their claim to be "Soldiers and Sailors Too" a proud boast by the heroic part they played on land, not only at Antwerp, but in Gallipoli and with the 63rd Division in France. This "close-up" shows the type of stalwart Britons who, small in numbers but great in heart, faced the mightiest army in the world.

GERMAN WHITE FLAG TREACHERY

I Shall Never Forget It!

by Capt. E. J. Needham

DURING the confused fighting on the Aisne, Captain Needham, who was with the 1st Northamptonshire Regt. (48th Foot), had the shattering experience of seeing a fellow officer shot down while parleying with Germans who were showing the white flag. He gives a most vivid account of the incident. In answer to the question, "Was this outrage deliberate?" he answers: "We shall never know"

THURSDAY, September the 17th, was a stormy one for the 48th, as many more days were to be during the next four years. "C" Company were in reserve, the three other companies being in the front line. The morning passed fairly quietly except for the usual shelling of the village allotments. But at about 1.30 p.m. the Germans launched an attack on our line in pouring rain and in considerable strength. "C" Company were ordered up to reinforce the right of the line, and to launch a counter-attack. We fell in quickly and doubled along the terrace to a point where the high bank between us and the front line levelled off, just opposite the right flank of "A" Company, the flank company of the battalion. Here we turned to the left and advanced, still at the double, in extended order. We reached the road (Chemin des Dames) and lay down there for a few minutes to get our breath. Then "Payker" (O.C. Coy.) gave the order to fix bayonets and a few minutes later to charge. Over the low bank we went, "Payker" shouting "Come on, the Cobblers!" and the men cheering like hell. I ran as hard and as best I could over the roots, with my drawn sword in one hand and my revolver in the other, stumbling over and cursing the roots and expecting every moment to be tripped up by my sword scabbard! We charged through heavy rifle and machine-gun fire and men were dropping off in every direction.

We got to about thirty yards from the trench which we had passed over on Monday, Sept. 14, and which was now strongly held. By now everyone was pretty well blown, and I was thankful when I saw the whole line to my right throwing themselves down flat. I shouted out "Down!" to my men, and suited the action to the word; in any case, nobody could have heard me over the appalling din.

We lay where we were for some considerable time, keeping up a steady fire at the trench ahead of us. We were being well sprinkled with shrapnel all this time, and again, owing to the rain and misty conditions, were getting practically no artillery support from our guns. I remember vividly a man immediately behind me letting off his rifle in my right ear and deafening me for a long time. He must have just missed blowing my head off. Now it was, and for the next hour or so, that

MORNING SUN ON THE AISNE

The headquarters of a cavalry regiment at Babonval late in September, at the end of the battle of the Aisne, is here seen in a peaceful setting. In a clearing in a wood the transport is parked and a few of the men are making a hasty toilet in the background, while in the foreground others awaken from the deep sleep of the battle-weary soldier.

Imperial War Museum



I found how very difficult it is to command one's men under active-service conditions. To control fire with an extended firing line was absolutely impossible. I shouted until I was hoarse and just *could not* make myself heard above the firing.

The line was now at a standstill, and looked like remaining so; the only thing to do appeared to be to keep up our fire and take what cover we could in the roots. After what seemed hours, I saw young Gordon (a fellow subaltern) crawling along on his tummy towards me from the right flank of the company; he eventually reached me and told me that poor, dear old "Payker" had been killed leading the charge and that I was in command of the company and also of the company of the 60th Rifles on our right, all of whose officers had been either killed or wounded!

I was horrified to hear of Parker's death and also at my position. Gordon and I lay down together for some time debating as to what on earth we should do. We decided to try to get the line on and rush to the trench. We passed messages down to each flank to tell everyone to be prepared to renew the charge when we blew our whistles and started.

LINE OF WHITE FLAGS

But when we did blow them as loud and long as we could, and started forward with the men next to us who had got the message correctly, the hostile fire broke out again stronger than ever; and as the rest of the line had not budged an inch, down we had to go again. We could see a group of people back in the road in the direction from which we had come, and I asked for a volunteer to take a message back to the C.O. A man next to me volunteered and I wrote out a message in my field-service notebook to say that Parker had been killed, that I understood all officers of the 60th were casualties, and that we were held up; and asked for orders. The man crawled off, and presently we saw him running down the hill to the road. After about ten minutes he came back with a written message for me telling me to hold on till further orders and to keep up my fire as much as possible. This we continued to do for another hour or so.

Then suddenly I heard the men shouting, "They're surrendering!" and, looking up, I saw a line of white flags (or rather white handkerchiefs or something of the kind tied to the muzzles of rifles) held up all along the German trench from in front of us right away to the left. I shouted out to the men to cease fire and stop where they were.

After a few minutes I saw a large number of Germans, two or three hundred at least, moving forward from their trench towards "A" Company on the road, some with their rifles, but many with white flags tied to them, and many with their hands up. They got down to "A" Company's trench and stood there for some time apparently conversing. All this time the white flags in front of us continued up and many Germans were standing with their hands up.

All of a sudden a burst of heavy firing broke out down by "A" Company's trench and we saw the Germans and our men engaged in a hand-to-hand fight. Still the white flags in front of us remained up. Just as Gordon and myself had decided to reopen fire and to chance whether we were right or wrong, I saw Captain J. A. Savage, of "D" Company, and Lieutenant J. H. S. Dimmer, of the 60th, walk through the left of "C" Company and on up to the German trench in front of us. Apparently they could talk German. Anyway, they stayed there talking for about five minutes and then started to walk back to us, the white flags still being up.

To our horror, after they had got about half-way to us, the Germans opened fire on them, and we saw Savage pitch forward dead, shot in the back.

Dimmer threw himself down and started to crawl back to us, eventually reaching our line all right. (Dimmer won the V.C. later in the war, and was eventually killed.)

During all this white-flag episode Gordon and I had been kneeling up, trying to make out what was going on, and were still doing so when the Huns opened fire on Savage and Dimmer. Gordon, who was not a foot away from me, suddenly pitched forward on his face and yelled out, "Oh, my God, I'm hit!" He writhed about on the ground in agony, and I tried to keep him quiet, while at the same time trying to watch Dimmer and what was going on down the line. He assured me again and again that he was shot through the stomach and that he was going to die.

Poor devil; it was hell, being able to do nothing for him and to see him in such agony. I could only try to reassure him. The scrap down by "A" Company was still going on, and by now we also were firing at the Germans opposite as hard as we could, having reopened fire as soon as Dimmer got back safely to us. Then, to our joy, we heard the tap-tap of a machine-gun behind us, and saw a machine-gun detachment (that of the 1st Queen's, as we afterwards learned) fairly lacing into the Germans in front of "A" Company, who started to bolt back into their own trench. Very few got back, however; those who were not mown down by the machine-gun fire (firing at about 150 yards' range) being finished off by the infuriated remnants (about seventy men) of "A" Company.

We redoubled our own fire, and about a quarter of an hour later up went the white flag again in front of us, to which we paid no attention whatever! Young Gordon's batman had volunteered to go back and get some stretcher-bearers up, and presently these arrived and we got poor Gordon on to the stretcher. He made me promise to see that his sword was sent back to his family, and his batman took it. They carried him off, and I never saw him again. Poor boy; he died at the casualty clearing station the next day, as he said he was going to, having suffered terribly, and was buried there. A typical cheery, plucky boy straight from Sandhurst, gazetted only that January, to whom everybody had taken a great fancy and whom I had particularly liked.

TRENCH FULL OF DEAD

By now all firing from the German trench had stopped, though intermittent shrapnel still continued, and it was getting pretty dark. Dimmer, who had taken over command of the company of the 60th, and who was senior to me, now passed word along to advance, take the trench and any Germans still in it. Accordingly we advanced and found the trench full of dead and dying Germans. Three or four badly wounded men got up and put their hands up. I went up to them and, pointing my revolver at them, signalled to them to go down towards the road. They shambled off quickly enough, and I sent some men down with them. We then, with the men of the 60th, proceeded to fill in the German trench, burying the dead, all of us furious and embittered at having seen Savage and Gordon killed under the white flag like that.

Having finished this unpleasant job, we got orders to retire to the road, which we proceeded to do. On arriving there we found the Colonel, Major Norman and Guy Robinson, and Guy came up to me and said, "You poor old devil! You must have had the hell of a time of it out there, but you did well." This kind greeting cheered me up no end, as I was feeling just about all in, being wet through to the skin, chilled to the bone and nerve-racked after having one of my very best



WHEN REAL TRENCH WARFARE BEGAN

These two photographs show the beginning of the deadlock of trench warfare. What were little more than ditches hastily dug were all that the fighters of September 1914 had to protect them from enemy fire. Both these trenches are on the Aisne. Above, British soldiers are constructing a machine-gun position, and below, men of a Scottish regiment are holding a trench as yet little more than knee deep.

Photopress and Imperial War Museum

friends in Parker killed, in having poor young Gordon practically killed beside me, and in seeing poor old Savage butchered in that foul style ; also the whole show had been such an awful muddle and I was terrified of having done the wrong thing. I shall never forget that afternoon till my dying day, nor the horror and uncertainty of it.

I can remember quite clearly today every incident connected with it, and I always shall. The white-flag incident, as I have related it, is as I saw it and can see it now. To this day it is a mystery to me. Did the Germans really mean to surrender, but on getting down to "A" Company to do so and finding so few men there, change their minds and try to reverse the proceedings and take them prisoner ? Or was the whole thing a put-up job ? We shall never know.

I give also hereafter the version of 2nd Lt. L. H. B. Burlton, who commanded the detachment of "A" Company concerned, as given in the Regimental War History, which fully bears out the appalling muddle that ensued :

"To our outstanding joy, we saw the enemy in front of us making signs of surrender by putting their hands up. Their fire stopped, and I ordered my men to do likewise. I stood up on the parapet and called for an officer to meet me. An individual, I think a private, who spoke English, responded to the call, and I went out some forty yards ahead of my trench to make the necessary arrangements. On finding

out that he was not an officer, I ordered him to return and tell his officer to replace him. A sergeant or under-officer next turned up, but was also returned as 'not wanted,' after which an officer did materialize. He appeared to find great difficulty in understanding me.

"I AGREED to accept surrender, but, as a preliminary thereto, naturally ordered him to make his men lay down their arms. Our conversation took place half-way between the opposing trenches, and, to my annoyance, I saw a large number of the enemy detach from their trenches before my arrangements were completed. Most of them had their rifles, but many had not and many had their hands up. I tried to make the Boche officer understand that I would order my men to fire if his men continued to advance with their arms. All this time the enemy continued to advance and the officer appeared quite willing to surrender but unable to grasp my idea of his men putting their rifles down as a preliminary. I found myself being surrounded by the advancing Germans, and as there was no officer in our trench (Second-Lieutenant Jarvis was in a state of concussion and non-effective), I could not afford to remain out in No Man's Land, which was rapidly being overwhelmed by the advancing Huns. I was, at the time, quite sure of their bona fides as to surrender, and did not want to open fire for two reasons. (I do not know how far I calculated these reasons at the time, but their validity was certainly in my mind.) First, I thought it was a bona-fide surrender, as many of the enemy came without arms and with their hands up; and, to make the illusion complete, some of them who were armed handed their rifles over to some of our Tommies who had come out to meet them on their own. It would have been a dirty business to have opened fire on men who were advancing with their arms because they did not understand English. Secondly, I had a message delivered verbally to me by one of my men, 'From the General, do not fire.'

"I REMEMBER that message most distinctly: its incongruity did not strike me at the time, and I thought it a genuine one. It came down from the right of our line from a quarter in front of which the enemy had also put up their hands. By this time I was back on the top of my trench with the Boche officers and the under-officer, the Huns, about four hundred strong, already amongst us, and in many cases surrendering their arms to 'Thomas Atkins' and being warmly shaken by the hand. This situation however, passed very quickly, for a German quite close to me shot one of my men dead, and the officer, on my saying that if he did not order an immediate cessation of fire, I would order mine to open, informed me I was his prisoner! We then all got to in earnest, so to speak, and at point-blank range, of course, no accuracy of shooting was necessary—the men used their butts and bayonets lustily. We were, however, far outnumbered, being but some seventy-odd against, I believe, four hundred. Then the most wonderful thing happened.

"THE Queen's (I think) on our right, seeing we were in trouble, and seeing that the Boches were, for the most part, standing on our parapet and firing down on us in the road, turned on their machine-gun, and the spectacle was one never to be forgotten. They fairly enfiladed the Huns on our parapet, and the execution can only be compared to that of a harvesting machine as it mows down wheat. A regular lane was cut—those Boches on their side of the lane (perhaps some hundred strong) made their best pace back to their trenches: those on our side of the lane threw down arms and surrendered; but we declined their offer, and, in fact, I think only kept one prisoner—a souvenir no doubt!"



NOT FOR HIRE BUT STILL IN SERVICE

Photo, F. Coleman

From the earliest days of the war the soldier's sense of humour heartened him up under the most terrible hardships. Here there is ready scope for it. All sorts of commercial vehicles were sent across to France as transport vehicles, and a London taxi is at the end of its last strange journey with all but its body gone, but still in service as "Headquarters R.A."—a tempting target for any passing Tommy with a sense of humour and a piece of chalk.

FAMOUS CORPS COMMANDERS THEN AND NOW

THREE famous war-time soldiers who lived to see twenty years of peace are shown in this page. In each case the photograph on the left shows the General as he was in war time and that on the right as he is today. Each of these three famous soldiers had previously served in the South African War of 1899–1901.









DE LISLE

At the outbreak of war General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle, who began his military career as a subaltern in the 2nd Durham Light Infantry and later served with the Royal Dragoons, was in command of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade and did brilliant work in early conflicts with the Germans. He succeeded General Hunter-Weston in command of the famous 29th Division until he was promoted in March 1918 to G.O.C. 13th Corps. He personally rallied his troops during the German counter-attack at Cambrai in December, 1917.

Photos, Russell, Keystone, Lafayette and Vandyk

HUNTER-WESTON

Familiarly known to his men as "Hunter-Bunter," Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston went to France in August 1914 in command of the 11th Infantry Brigade. In 1915 he won great distinction in Gallipoli, having been in command of the 29th Division when the famous landing at Cape Helles was effected. He returned to France in 1916 to command the 8th Corps, and was mentioned ten times in despatches.





CAVAN

Lord Cavan saw his first active service in the South African War. Early in the Great War he took over the command of the 4th (Guards) Brigade, and when the Guards Division was formed in June 1915 he became its commander. He went to Italy in 1917 with the 14th Corps, and early in 1918 succeeded General Plumer as G.O.C. of the British forces there. Chief of the Imperial General Staff 1922–26, Lord Cavan was made a Field-Marshal in 1932.

I SAW RHEIMS CATHEDRAL BURN

by G. Ward Price

'Daily Mail' War Correspondent, 1914

ON September 18, 1914, the first German shells came hurtling into Rheims bringing death and destruction to the ancient capital of the Champagne district. Only twenty years after the war was the glorious cathedral restored to its original beauty. One of the most famous of Britain's war correspondents, Mr. Ward Price saw the historic tragedy of 1914 and here describes the heartbreaking emotions which it evoked

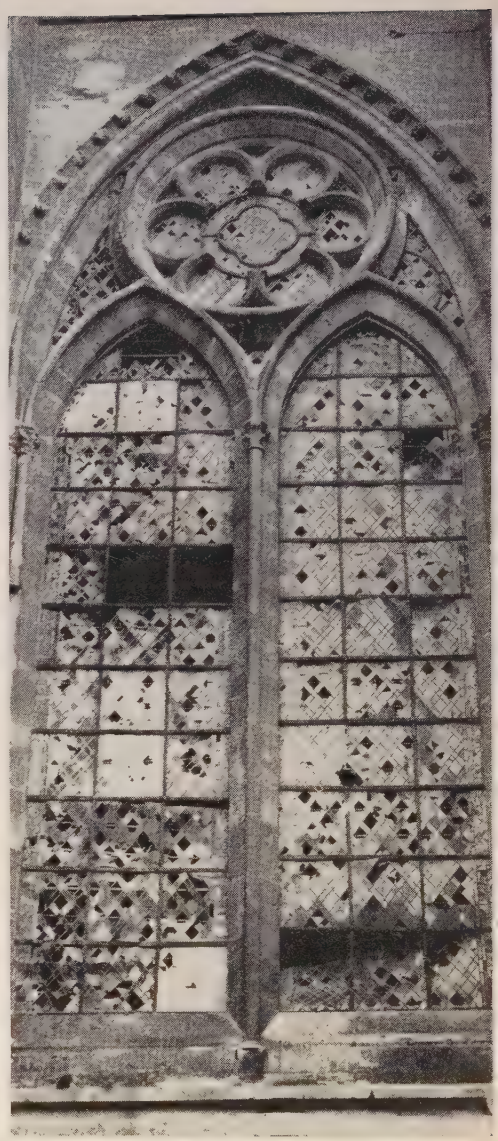
IN the opening weeks of the Great War no single event made a profounder and more world-wide impression than the burning of Rheims Cathedral during the bombardment of the town in September 1914. After two decades of restoration, that masterpiece of medieval Gothic was reopened on July 8, 1938.

I saw the historic tragedy of 1914, and was the only Englishman to witness it. I can vividly recall the horror and dismay of looking on the wreckage of one of the world's greatest monuments of architecture.

It was made the more impressive to me by the fact that only two days earlier I had been taken all over the cathedral by the Abbé Andrieux, and from one of its 270-ft.-high towers had looked across towards the low wooded hills from which the German batteries were shelling the town in a desultory way.

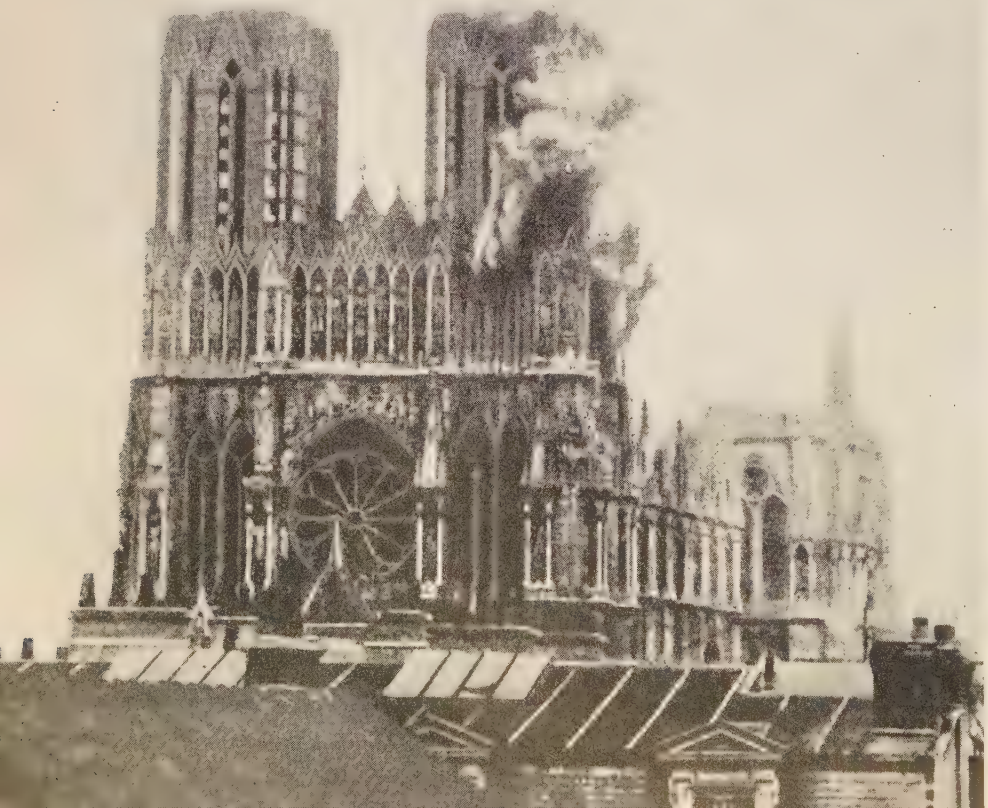
"How this would burn!" I had exclaimed, as we clambered up there through a network of ancient oaken beams, little thinking that so soon the flames would be roaring among those rafters, feeding fiercely on fourteenth-century wood-carving, and splintering the famous amber-coloured glass, the secret of whose manufacture is lost.

Those were the days when practically no news came from the front, the war



FRANCE'S GLORY, GERMANY'S SHAME

The words of Mr. Ward Price at the opening of this chapter show that a shudder of horror went through the whole of the civilized world at the destruction of Rheims Cathedral. That cruel deed struck at the very soul of France, for much of French history is enshrined in the stones of that venerable pile. The unique photograph below was taken during the bombardment and shows a shell actually bursting on one of the towers. Right, is one of the famous stained glass windows, showing the damage done by the German fire.



area being strictly closed to civilians from outside. I had a car, however, and had been given a military pass which enabled me to get out of Paris towards the front.

It was thus that I had come to Rheims on a Thursday afternoon. Its streets were empty.

The cathedral itself was deserted, except for a dozen wounded German soldiers, picked up after the retirement of their own troops.

AFTER visiting some of the townspeople who were huddled in the deep champagne-cellars, I went back to Paris, and forty-eight hours later returned to Rheims.

The road crosses a plain from Epernay, and the twin towers of the cathedral stand out high above the low roofs of the town ahead. To my amazement there was rolling up between them a sluggish cloud of dense black smoke.

Shells were still falling in the streets, and to preserve my means of transport



from possible damage, I left the car outside the town, going on into Rheims on a bicycle that I had brought with me.

Three French sentries stood by the gaping great west doors of the cathedral, for the old oak portals had been entirely consumed. They would not let me enter the building, but one could see the nave filled with a confusion of charred and still smouldering beams.

THE fire had started, I was told, at four o'clock the previous afternoon. A shell had hit some scaffolding round one of the towers and set fire to it. The priests had managed to put out the first blaze, but another shell, falling on the roof, set the old woodwork burning, and the wind had spread the flames till all the ceiling of the nave was alight.

The sparks fell on the long piles of straw in the aisles below. The number of German wounded lying there had been increased to 130, and it was with great difficulty that most of them were saved. Not all got away. I could see their charred bodies lying crushed beneath the still smouldering fallen rafters.

Even those who escaped from the burning building were still in danger, for soldiers and townspeople, infuriated by the partial destruction of their splendid church, tried to drive them back into the flames.

"They shall go back and burn with the cathedral or we will shoot them down!" was the savage cry. The priests stood by the wounded men, and reasoned with the enraged French soldiers.

"You are mad, and will bring disgrace on France!" shouted one of the abbés. "Anyhow, you shall shoot me first, for I will not move!"

Only with great difficulty and after some rough handling were the rescued Germans taken to refuge in a building close by.

"It is the nave that has been most injured by the fire," I wrote that same evening. "The roof has gone, the outer roof, that is to say, for the inner vaulting of stonework that was below the rafters still hides the blackened nave from the sky.

"The High Altar itself remains, though its furniture, together with everything that stood in the nave and choir, has disappeared.

"The walls and towers are discoloured by the flames, but there does not seem any reason to fear that the cathedral cannot be restored. These vast medieval monastic piles are so solid and so bare of woodwork and furniture within that the flames can do little more than crack the surface of their stone and destroy their ornamentation."

That forecast is today happily fulfilled. The damaged cathedral, patiently repaired, now stands ready again for worship, with the added value of serving as a lasting memorial to the blind destructiveness of war.

WRECKED BY BARBARISM—RESTORED BY PATRIOTISM

The indomitable patriotism of the French people was never better exemplified than in their determination that Rheims Cathedral should rise again in all its glory. Left, is the battered shell, the roof open to the sky, as it was in war-time. Below, is the result of the almost incredible skill and perseverance of the restorers during twenty years of ceaseless toil; the west front of the cathedral triumphantly floodlit on its reopening in 1938.

E.N.A. and Keystone



'SUICIDE SQUADRON': Tragedy of the Broad Fourteens

One U-Boat Sinks Three Cruisers

by Commander Austin Tyrer, R.D., R.N.R.

A SEVERE blow to the British Navy occurred on Sept. 22, 1914, when three cruisers, the Hogue, Aboukir and Cressy, were sunk in the North Sea by the torpedoes of one German submarine. The narrative which follows is one that was originally told by Commander Tyrer, one of the Hogue's survivors, to Captain Barry O'Brien. His pitiful story of a sea black with drowning men is related with a power and directness worthy of the greatest naval writers



L.N.A.

HEROES OF THE R.N.R.
Eighty-five per cent of the men who manned the Hogue, Aboukir and Cressy when they were sunk were Naval Reservists. These men are leaving Cowes to report for duty in August 1914.

THE Naval Reserves were called out on August 3, 1914, and on that momentous day I was ordered down to Chatham Barracks, from where I was sent aboard the Hogue, which vessel was lying off the dockyard. All regular naval officers and men had been recalled from leave on July 27, and there was great activity. Vessels were being coaled at breakneck speed, empty lorries and lorries laden with stores and ammunition thundered up and down the hot, dusty road leading from and to the dockyard gates; working parties of bluejackets hastened with handcarts in and out of the stores depot; on the parade ground fresh detachments of sailors and marines were constantly being lined up, inspected and marched off. Everyone in Chatham seemed suddenly to have jumped into uniform.

Brass-hatted admirals, commodores and captains strode hither and thither, with official documents under their arms and a grim look in their eyes. Though it had not yet been declared, war with Germany was regarded as inevitable, and everyone, officers and men alike, were in a fair flutter of excitement for fear the fun would be over without their having been in it.

The Hogue was manned by a nucleus crew when I joined her. However, within thirty-six hours her complement had been made up to full strength; and before daylight spread over Chatham on August 5—only a few hours after declaration of war—we were at sea, in company with the Aboukir and Cressy bound down Channel.

After spending a few days cruising to and fro between the Conningsbeg Lightship and Galley Head, the three of us proceeded to the eastern entrance of the English Channel. Here, with Sheerness as our base, we were joined by the Euryalus and the Bacchante. The five of us, with the Euryalus as flagship, comprised the 7th Cruiser Squadron of the 3rd Fleet. Our job, according to our war orders, was to support the 1st and 3rd Flotillas of light cruisers and destroyers operating from Harwich, and to look out for enemy transports and any "blacklist" neutral vessels that might have slipped through the outer patrols.

Of 12,000 tons displacement, these five armoured cruisers of the Bacchante class were all about fifteen years old. Their armament consisted of twelve 6-in. and two 9·2-in. guns.

THEY had a maximum speed of 21½ knots, and each carried a crew of approximately 750 officers and men. Captain Wilmot S. Nicholson was our captain in the Hogue; Commander Reginald S. Norton was the chief executive officer. In addition to other R.N. officers, we carried three R.N.R. officers, including myself, and a number of young cadets fresh from Osborne.

Shortly after we had taken up our beat in the Narrow Seas, the vessels of our squadron were detailed to assist the transportation and cover the disembarkation of the Brigade of Marines which, on August 27, was landed at Ostend to endeavour to relieve the pressure on our troops retreating from Mons, and to give the Germans the impression that a much more formidable force was to follow. The landing was effected without mishap.

Two days later, on August 28, the Heligoland Bight action took place, and my vessel was given the job of towing the Arethusa, which had been disabled in the action, back to harbour. From that date until the tragic disaster, three weeks later, life ran smoothly enough for us. Sometimes we patrolled the Dogger Bank area; at other times the Broad Fourteens over on the Dutch coast. The five of us took it in turns to return to Sheerness to coal and give the men a run ashore. Thus there were never more than four, and sometimes only three, of us on patrol at a time. Weather permitting, we always had a destroyer escort, from which fact we judged that we were regarded as of some importance.

We had been told that our job was to support the 1st and 3rd Flotillas of light cruisers and destroyers, but hitherto they had conducted their activities without calling on us. Could there be another reason for our presence in the Narrow Seas, we wondered? And then, at last, someone suggested one.

We were a "suicide squadron," he averred. Our real function was to act as decoys. We were to entice the German fleet into attacking us, then lead it away from its base southwards, while our Grand Fleet and Battle-Cruiser Squadron swept down from the northward, cut off its retreat, cornered it, and finally annihilated it over our dead bodies.

Within a week of first having been whispered, this explanation of our real function had become an accepted fact, not merely with the men in the squadron itself but with the whole of Sheerness and even the main fleets up north.

The summer of 1914 broke about the middle of September. A series of equinoctial gales followed. The first of these lasted from September 18 to 21. On the 19th the weather was so bad that the destroyer flotillas were ordered back to harbour. In a message to the Admiralty the admiral of our squadron suggested that he should continue the

patrol of the Dogger Bank area with the cruisers alone.

The admiral's reply, broadcast to all concerned, was as follows :

" The Dogger Bank Patrol need not be continued. Weather too bad for destroyers to go to sea. Arrange for cruisers to watch the Broad Fourteens."

This message subsequently came in for much criticism, and several " brass hats " lost their jobs at the Admiralty as the result of it. It was argued by many officers that the Dogger Bank area was the area that should have been patrolled, in the circumstances. The sea there was much worse than on the Broad Fourteens, they pointed out, and the risk of submarine attack consequently far less. These craft in 1914 were not the big, highly efficient boats they were in 1917 and 1918 ; they needed far more favourable conditions under which to attack.

The Broad Fourteens Patrol which we now took up extended in a north-north-east and south-south-west line of direction, between the Terschelling Lightship to the northward and the Maas Lightship to the southward—a distance of 92 miles.



A CAPTAIN COURAGEOUS

Captain Wilmot Nicholson was in command of H.M.S. Hogue (seen right) when the finest spirit of the British Navy was shown by every officer and man when his ship and the Aboukir and the Cressy were torpedoed in the space of 47 minutes.

The patrol at this time consisted of four ships : Euryalus, Cressy, Hogue, and Aboukir. The Bacchante was at Sheerness, and on September 20 the flagship followed her there to coal. Her need of fuel at this juncture proved very fortunate for her.

DURING the afternoon of the 21st the weather began to moderate, and that night our destroyer escort started out from Harwich to join us. Criticism has been levelled at the senior officer of the squadron at that time for not going to meet them. His reasons for not doing so are best known to himself. Reaching the northern limit of the patrol, viz., the Terschelling Lightship, about 9 p.m., the three of us turned and steamed slowly southward. We were in line ahead formation, about two miles from one another, in the following order : Aboukir, Hogue, Cressy. None of us was zig-zagging.

I was acting as navigator on the Hogue during the middle watch that night. The navigator relieved me at 4 a.m. A few minutes later, having reached the southern limit of the beat, west of the Maas Lightship, the three of us turned sixteen points, in rotation, and headed up north again.

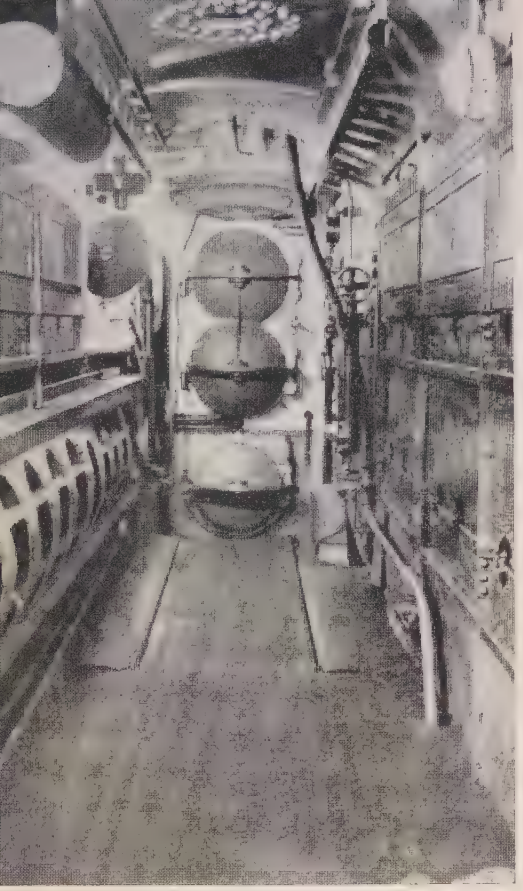
As soon as this manœuvre had been completed I went below and turned in. Within ten minutes I was fast asleep. Two hours later—at 6.25 a.m., to be exact—I was awakened by the bugler sounding " General Quarters." A general stampeding of feet followed, above which my ear detected a quicker and louder throb from the engines below.

Six weeks of living on top of a volcano, so to speak, expecting to be blown sky-high at any moment, had got us into the habit of dressing quickly. Within three minutes I was on deck, fully clothed. Dawn had broken. The Aboukir was on our beam, and the Cressy was closing from astern. Someone told me that the Aboukir had hit, or been hit, by something. He thought it was a mine. Her speed had dropped to about four knots, and we went quickly past her. A few moments later, however, we reduced our speed to conform with hers. We were then about a quarter of a mile ahead of her. Meanwhile the Cressy had closed and taken up station about 400 yards on her port beam. I do not know what the senior captain's intention was at that moment. If under the impression that the Aboukir had hit a mine, he no doubt hoped that she would be able to reach port under her own steam, and intended her two consorts to accompany her.

Any such hope must have quickly been dispelled from his mind, however, for the lame vessel slowly lost way and, rolling sluggishly athwart the swell, began to heel over to port and settle by the head.

Aboard the Hogue the engines were instantly put to full astern, and orders were given to turn out all boats and unlash and throw overboard all timber on the upper deck. My job was to lower the port cutter. While I was doing that the Aboukir heeled over still more. Her crew were frantically trying





TRINITY OF DEATH DEALERS

This is the torpedo room of a 1914 German submarine of the type that sank the Hogue, Aboukir and Cressy, one after the other. At the extreme end are three torpedoes ready for launching.

to launch their boats. One of these, laden with men, began to move slowly down the starboard or high side of the vessel, but so steep had become her list that it stuck half-way. Using boat-hooks and oars the sailors tried to thrust it off, without avail.

Finally abandoning the attempt they tore off their clothes and crawled out of the boat on to the ship's side, now lying over at an angle of about sixty degrees. Scores of other naked men had meanwhile begun to claw their way down it. The rising sun glistened on their bodies and on the wet, smooth steel plates of the vessel's rounded bilge. Down they came, slowly, inch by inch, some sitting, others standing, several lying flat.

And then, suddenly, it was all over. The vessel had completely turned turtle, and on all sides of her, as she floated for a few minutes bottom up, the sea was literally black with a mass of struggling humanity.

Our two cutters had by now been dispatched to the rescue and the big picket-boat was being hoisted without steam up on the main derrick when, suddenly, there was a muffled explosion under me, and I realized that a torpedo, and not a mine, had sunk the Aboukir, and that we had been torpedoed as well. A second torpedo struck us almost immediately after the first, apparently under the 9·2 magazine aft, for this time there was a tremendous explosion and a shower of débris and sparks rose with a dense, black volume of smoke from the bowels of the ship and shot into the sky. The concussion of this second explosion sent men sprawling in all directions. A series of violent tremors ran through the vessel, and she began slowly to heel over to starboard.

WHATEVER may have been their doubts about the Aboukir sinking, our men quite clearly had none with regard to the Hogue's fate. Confusion suddenly broke loose. Men rushed here and there. Some tore at the lashings of a pattern 3 target (a large contraption capable of supporting several men); others rushed below and returned with mess-stools, benches, and rolled-up hammocks, which they flung overboard. Most of the heavy timber on deck had already gone over, but the chocks of the boats remained. These were torn up and pitched over after the other things.

Within three minutes of the first torpedo hitting her the Hogue's list had increased to about forty degrees, and realizing that her end was very near all hands began to tear off their clothes and crawl down the high side or jump overboard to leeward. To add to the general confusion the stokehold crowd suddenly poured up on deck, their blackened faces dripping sweat and tense with apprehension.

It was now a case of every man for himself, and tearing off my boots and clothing and then fastening to my wrist by its chain my gold watch, which I greatly prized, I walked down the sloping deck into the water and struck out for dear life.

My immediate intention was to get clear of the sinking ship before she toppled over on top of me. In this I was not successful, however. Glancing upward, I saw the four leaning funnels towering above me. The next instant, with a seething hiss and a tremendous splash, they literally came down on top of me, carrying me beneath the surface.

How I escaped being crushed to death I shall never know. After what seemed an interminable time I became aware of the alarming fact that I was jammed between the steam pipe on one of the funnels and the funnel itself. I tried desperately to kick myself clear, but could not move. The heat from the steam pipe was scorching my bare flesh, and my chest felt as if it were going to burst. Then gradually a feeling of extreme drowsiness overcame me. I no longer felt any suffocation or any fear. On the contrary, I recollect feeling pleasantly surprised that drowning was not as bad as I had imagined it. No doubt I was actually drowning at that moment. Indeed, to have experienced that strange, apathetic indifference I must have been pretty far gone. Another few seconds beneath the surface would have finished me off, I suppose; but thanks to some reason I never have been able to explain, I suddenly shot clear.

My first lungful of fresh air, when I came to the surface, instantly swept away my resignation to death, awakened my hopes and desire to live, and set my brain working again. About twenty yards from me the Hogue's flat, glistening bottom stuck up like a half-tide rock above the surface, with the waves making a clean breach over it. Thus she remained for a few minutes before taking her last plunge. On all sides of me now were hundreds of struggling and drowning men, and realizing the necessity of getting clear of them I began to swim out into the open.

SUBMARINE'S 'HAT TRICK'

AT that moment the dull rumble of gunfire rolled across the sea, and glancing over my shoulder I saw the Cressy blazing away at what presumably was a conning tower or a periscope. She, too, had been busily engaged launching boats to rescue the Aboukir's survivors when we were struck, and spotting the periscope of the submarine attacking us she had instantly opened rapid fire and leapt ahead under full power to ram it. Though unsuccessful in this, she would at least have been able to make good her escape had her captain and officers thought of their own safety. But with greater chivalry than prudence—and what seaman will find it in him to blame them?—they returned to continue the work of rescue they had begun.

The gunfire I now heard was directed at a periscope which had suddenly bobbed up on the Cressy's starboard quarter.

However, almost at the same instant that the first salvo broke loose the milky white track of a torpedo sped across the surface, and the vessel was struck on her starboard side. A second torpedo exploded in her No. 5 boiler-room, and before the anguished eyes of the poor fellows who were confidently swimming towards her, she heeled over to starboard and sank. The submarine—it was proved to be only one—had done the "hat trick," bagged the three of us.

I shall never forget the dreadful spectacle in the water at that moment. Approximately two thousand swimming or drowning men were all herded

together, hardly with elbow room. Strong swimmers were dragged under in the frenzied clutches of weak swimmers or men who could not swim at all. The cries for help were loud and full-throated at first, but they gradually subsided into a sort of low, wailing chant, which rose and fell like the mutter of a surf on a distant shore. The tragic part about it all was the fact that no one had on a lifebelt for the simple reason that, by some stupendous oversight, these things had not been served out to the ships!

After I had been swimming about aimlessly for a short time I came across a couple of rolled-up hammocks, with which I supported myself with one under each arm. Though a fairly good swimmer, I was badly in need of a rest.

I was not allowed to remain in undisputed possession of my find for long, however. In less than no time half a dozen men were round me. A scramble followed and, becoming waterlogged, the hammocks sank. Striking out on my own once more, I became aware of the fact that my heavy watch was weighing down my right arm and impeding my stroke. The time had come to part with it, and, loosening its chain, I let it sink. Five or ten minutes later I came across our steam packet-boat, which was being hoisted outboard when the Hogue sank, and must have unhooked itself and floated clear. Half full of water, the boat lay very low in the sea, so I had little difficulty in dragging myself over its gunwale. There was no one else in it, but while bailing it out I was joined by half a dozen other men.

As soon as we had it sufficiently dry we set to work to raise steam in the boat. The coal was soaking wet, of course, but by pouring paraffin oil on it and igniting this with the flares that had been hermetically sealed in their cans, we eventually got it to burn. No sooner had we got steam on the boiler and started the engine, however, than a rope, which had been dangling unnoticed over the stern, fouled the propeller and rendered our labours vain.

At this stage help arrived. First a Dutch steamer, named Flora, bound from Rotterdam to Leith; then our destroyers, and, later, another Dutch steamer, named Titan, and two Lowestoft steam trawlers. The Flora rescued 287 men; the Titan and two trawlers respectively 25 and 190 men. The remainder of the survivors, numbering about 300, were picked up by our destroyers, which had to break away in the middle of their rescue work to beat off yet another submarine attack. I was one of the survivors picked up by the Flora.

One of the last tragic sights I recollect seeing before I walked into the water from the sinking Hogue was our engineer-commander, who had been grievously injured in the explosion, being brought on deck. In some inexplicable way he managed to keep afloat and was picked up—only to die of his injuries, ironically enough.

One of my fellow R.N.R. shipmates had been landed sick before the disaster. The other was last seen clinging with other men to a piece of wreckage. Suddenly he said: "I'm done," let go and sank.

When, little by little, the facts of the disaster became known, there was a storm of protest in the English Press.

Lieutenant Weddigen, the commander of the German submarine which had sunk us, did not live long to enjoy his fame. His submarine was sunk by the Dreadnought.



THE MEN WHO SANK THREE BRITISH CRUISERS IN AN HOUR

This German picture postcard was issued just after the sinking of the cruisers Hogue, Aboukir and Cressy to celebrate what was considered a great naval victory. It bears the caption, "Our Heroes! The crew, fortunate to be home again, of submarine U 9 (Lieut.-Commander Weddigen) who through their heroism on September 22 sent three English cruisers to the bottom." Lieut.-Commander Weddigen is in the centre of the first row standing; on his right is his second-in-command, on his left the engineer officer. In March 1915, he was rammed and sunk in the U 29.



MARINES TO THE RESCUE AT OSTEND IN AUGUST 1914

These photographs throw light on an almost forgotten episode of the early days of the war in Belgium. After the fall of Brussels the main Belgian Army retired to Antwerp and made a gallant stand to hold the German Army and relieve the pressure on their French Allies. To effect a diversion in their favour three battalions of the Royal Marine Light Infantry under Brigadier-General Sir George Aston were landed at Ostend on August 27 and 28, and although they re-embarked on August 31 their presence caused alarming rumours to reach German G.H.Q. of a much greater force being at hand, which was, in fact, the real purpose of the landing.



Above, Marines are seen approaching the quay at Ostend in the boats of the cruiser (seen in the offing) that brought them over, towed by a pinnace. The people of Ostend gave the men an enthusiastic welcome, believing that their town might yet be saved. Right, Marines are cleaning their rifles just after the landing. Below, in the flat country behind Ostend, a section is lining a ditch alongside a road on the look-out for the advance German cavalry patrols.

Imperial War Museum and Photopress



SECTION V

The Antwerp Adventure

Sept. 25 — Oct. 13, 1914

IN September 1914 Antwerp presented a formidable obstacle to the German advance to the coast. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Winston Churchill, had at his disposal a Marine Brigade and two more Brigades of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. He threw them into the defence of Belgium's key city and for some days their support was of the greatest value. But Antwerp was doomed. ¶ Incidents in its gallant defence are here described by a famous newspaper correspondent, Mr. J. M. N. Jeffries, who was in Antwerp during the siege, and the Rev. Canon H. C. Foster, a padre with the troops in the trenches. ¶ The famous novelist, Miss May Sinclair, writes of her work with an Ambulance Unit when Belgium was the melting pot of Europe.

*** 38 September 25—October 13, 1914**

WE BROUGHT SUCCOUR to BELGIUM

by May Sinclair



FRIEND OF BELGIUM

Early in 1914 Miss May Sinclair, author of "The Divine Fire," put her pen aside and joined a voluntary field ambulance which went to succour the peoples and armies of Belgium. This photograph was taken soon after Miss Sinclair had completed her war service.

AFTER the painful births and deaths of I don't know how many committees, after six weeks' struggling with something we imagined to be Red Tape, which proved to be the combined egoism of several persons all desperately anxious to "get to the Front," and desperately afraid of somebody else . . . getting there first, we are actually off. . . .

Then somebody said, "Let's help the Belgian refugees." . . . And by some abrupt, incalculable turn of destiny, the British Red Cross, which had kicked us so persistently, suddenly gave us all the ambulances we wanted.

And we are off. There are thirteen of us: the Commandant, and Dr. Haynes and Dr. Bird under him; and Mrs. Torrence, a trained nurse and midwife, who can drive a motor car through anything, and take it to bits and put it together again; Janet McNeil, also an expert motorist; and Ursula Dearmer and Mrs. Lambert, Red Cross emergency nurses; Mr. Grierson, Mr. Foster and Mr. Riley, stretcher-bearers, and two chauffeurs and me. . . .

And we have landed at Ostend.

I'll confess now that I dreaded Ostend more than anything. We had been told there were horrors upon horrors in Ostend. . . . I imagined the streets crowded with refugee women bearing children, and the Digue covered with horrific bathing machines. On the other hand, Ostend was said to be the safest spot in Europe.

No Germans there. No Zeppelins. No bombs.

Saturday, 26th.

For five weeks, ever since I knew that I must certainly go out with this expedition, I had been living in black funk, in shameful and appalling terror. Every night before I went to sleep I saw . . . trunks without heads, heads without trunks, limbs tangled in intestines, corpses by every roadside, murders, mutilations, my friends shot dead before my eyes. . . .

We go along a straight flat highway of grey stones and between thin lines of trees. There are no hedges . . . This country is formed for the very expression of peace. . . . I am going straight into the horror of war. For all I know it may be anywhere, here, behind this sentry; or there, beyond that line of willows. . . . I don't care. I cannot realize it. All that I can see or feel at the moment is this beauty. . . Is it possible that I am enjoying myself? . . .

There are straggling troops on the road now. . . . We pass through Bruges without seeing it. . . . Half-way between Bruges and Ghent an embankment thrown up on each side of the road tells of possible patrols and casual shooting. It is the first visible intimation that the enemy may be anywhere. . . . You say to yourself, curiously excited, "It is coming. Now—or the next minute—perhaps at the end of the road." . . .

Mrs. Torrence is not afraid of anything. . . . I conceive an adoration for her, and a corresponding distaste for myself. For I do know what fear is. . . .

Sunday, 27th.

We hang about waiting for orders. . . .

I confess to a slight, persistent fear of *seeing* these wounded whom I cannot help. . . . It waits for me in every corridor and at the turn of every stair, and it makes me loathe myself.

We have news of a battle at Alost, about 15 kilometres south-east of Ghent. The Belgians are moving 40,000 men from Antwerp towards Ghent, and heavy fighting is expected. . . .

Odd how the war changes us. I who abhor and resist authority . . . am enamoured of this Power and utterly submissive. I realize with something of a thrill that we are in a military hospital under military orders.

. . . . . .

11 *a.m.*

I have seen one of them. As I went downstairs this morning, two men carrying a stretcher crossed the landing below. I saw the outline of the wounded body under the blanket, and the head laid back on the pillow. It is impossible, it is inconceivable that I should have been afraid of seeing this. . . .

Mrs. Torrence and Janet McNeil are beginning to ask themselves what they are here for. To go through the wards is only to be in the way of the angelic beings with red crosses on their breasts and foreheads, who are already somewhat in each other's way. . . . I wonder whether there is anything I could conceivably do for the wounded that would not bore them inexpressibly. . . .



BELGIUM CALLED AND BRITISH WOMEN ANSWERED

That passionate desire to do something to help the stricken people of Belgium which Miss May Sinclair recalls in this chapter was shared by British women of every age and class. Above is a party of British nurses at Namur before it fell. On the extreme left is Millicent Duchess of Sutherland, wearing the uniform of a Belgian Army nurse. She was among the first to cross the Channel and spent four years in ministering to the wounded.

I don't want to describe that ward, or the effect of those rows upon rows of beds, . . . the intensity of physical anguish suggested by sheer force of multiplication. . . . What you feel . . . is not pity, . . . because it is so near to adoration. . . . If you are tired of the burden and malady of self, go into one of those great wards and you will find instant release. You and the sum of your little consciousness are not things that matter any more.

. . . . . .

INTENSE excitement this time, for one of four wounded is a German. He was lying on a stretcher. . . . His thick blond hair stood up stiff from his forehead. His little blond moustache was turned up and twisted fiercely like the Kaiser's. The crowd booed him as he lay there. His was a terrible pathos, unlike any other. He was so defiant and so helpless. And there's another emotion gone by the board. You simply could not hate him.

Monday, 28th.

We have been here a hundred years. Car No. 1 went out at 8.30 this morning. . . . The Commandant dashed into my room after luncheon. . . . He was like a child who has rushed in to tell you how ripping the pantomime was.

"We've been *under fire*!" . . .

IN the afternoon Mademoiselle F. called to take me to the Palais des Fêtes. . . . There are four thousand [refugees] lying on straw in the outer hall, in a space larger than Olympia. They are laid out in rows all round the four walls, and on every foot of ground between: men, women and children together, packed so tight that there is barely standing-room between any two of them. . . . Some have hollowed out a place in the straw or piled a barrier of straw between themselves and their neighbours, in a piteous attempt at privacy; some have dragged their own bedding with them and are lodged in comparative comfort. . . . None turns from his neighbour. . . . The rigidly righteous *bourgeoise* lies in the straw breast to breast with the harlot of the village slum, and her innocent daughter back to back with the parish drunkard. . . . They tell you that when darkness comes down on all this, there is hell. But you do not believe it. You can see nothing sordid and nothing ugly here. The scale is too vast. . . .

Two or three figures mount guard over this litter of prostrate forms. They are old men and old women seated on chairs. They sit upright and immobile, with their hands folded on their knees. . . . They have the dignity of figures that will endure, like that, for ever. They are Flamands.

The place is terribly still. . . . These people do not speak to each other. . . . They do not think. They do not, for the moment, feel. In all the four thousand—except for the child crying yonder—there is not one tear. . . .

The dear little Belgian lady, your guide, will not let you miss anything. "Voici deux jeunes mariés, qui dorment. Regardez l'homme; il tient encore la main de sa femme. . . . C'est triste, n'est ce pas, Mademoiselle?"

And you say, "Oui, Mademoiselle. C'est bien triste." . . . You are not sure that "triste" is the word for it. . . . It is a sorrow that transcends all sorrow that you have ever known. . . .

M. ———, the Belgian Red Cross guide who goes out with our ambulances. . . . says that the Germans are now within a few miles of Ghent . . . there are 10,000 Germans ready to march into Ghent tomorrow morning.

Tuesday, 29th.

No Germans in Ghent. No Germans reported near Ghent.

Thursday, October 1st.

I have found something to do. Not, much, but still something. I am to look after the linen for the ambulances, to take away the blood-stained pillow-slips and blankets, and deliver them at the laundry and get clean ones from the linen-room. It's odd, but I'm almost foolishly elated at being allowed to do this. . . . Then, just as I am beginning to lift up my head, the blow falls. Not one member of the Field Ambulance Corps is to be allowed to work at the Palais des Fêtes, for fear of bringing fever into the Military Hospital.

Five days in Ghent, and not a thing done. . . . What's more, I'm bored. . . .

Sunday, 4th.

THE Ambulance has been ordered to take two Belgian professors (or else they are doctors) into Antwerp. . . . It seems incredible, but I am going, too. I shall see the siege and hear the guns that were brought up from Namur. . . . But the odd thing is that there is no excitement about it. . . . It is simply what I came out for. . . .

Except for sentries and straggling troops and the long trains of refugees, the country is as peaceful between Ghent and St. Nicolas as it was last week between Ostend and Ghent. . . . At St. Nicolas we overtake Dr. Wilson and Mr. Davidson walking into Antwerp. They tell us the news. The British troops have come. At last! They have been through before us on their way to Antwerp. . . .

Every minute you look for the flight of the shells across the grey and the fall of a tower or a chimney. But the grey is utterly peaceful and the trees and the tall chimneys remain . . . And at last you turn in a righteous indignation and say: "Where is the bombardment?" . . . The bombardment is at the outer forts. . . . Oh, the outer forts are 30 kilometres away. No. Not there. To your right. . . .

AT twilight, from the river, with its lamps lit and all its waters shining, Antwerp looked as beautiful as Venice and as safe and still. For the dykes are her defences on this side. But for the trudging regiments you would not have guessed that on the land side the outer ramparts were being shelled incessantly. . . .

It's heart-breaking the way these dear Belgians take the British. . . . Now that we *have* come their belief in us is almost unbearable. They really think we are going to save Antwerp. Somewhere between Antwerp and St. Nicolas the population of a whole village turned out to meet us with cries of "Les Anglais! Les Anglaises!" and laughed for joy. . . . You couldn't persuade them that the British fought for Belgium at Mons. We got into Ghent at midnight.

A TRAIN full of British troops from Ostend came into the station yesterday at the same time as the ambulance train from Antwerp. . . . When the wounded Belgians saw the British they struggled to their feet. At every window of the ambulance train bandaged heads were thrust out and bandaged hands waved. And the Belgians shouted. But the British stood dumb, stolid and impassive before their enthusiasm. Mrs. Torrence called out, "Give them a cheer, boys. They're the bravest little soldiers in the world." Then the Tommies let themselves go, and the station roof nearly flew off with the explosion.

Wednesday, 7th.

Got very near the fighting this time. Mr. L. (Heaven bless him!) took me

'THE BRAVEST LITTLE SOLDIERS IN THE WORLD'

As the German Army swept through Belgium it was impossible to make provision for the Belgian wounded in their own country, and many were taken across the Channel to England. Here is a scene at the harbour station at Ostend before the town passed into German hands. A hospital train has just deposited its sad load of wounded Belgians, who had so well earned the cheers they got from the British Tommies as Miss Sinclair relates above.

Photopress





Photopress

BACK THEY CAME—FOOTSORE BUT NOT FAINTHEARTED

In the course of their attempt to save Antwerp and prevent the Germans reaching the Channel ports, British troops got as far as Ghent, but they remained there only one day, and on September 13, together with many of the civilian inhabitants of Ghent, they were retreating to the ports. In this photograph British troops and refugees from Ghent are seen passing through Ostend, now certain to fall, towards Dunkirk.

out with him in the War Correspondents' car to see what the Ambulance was doing at Zele. . . . On the skyline was a whole fleet of little clouds that hung low over the earth . . . perpetually renewed. . . . Each cloud of this fleet of clouds was the smoke from a burning village. . . .

STRAIGHT ahead, as we looked westwards, we heard the guns. The sound came from somewhere over there and from two quarters; German guns booming away on the south, Belgian (? French) guns answering from the north. . . . We must have now been on the outer edge of a line of fire stretching west and east following the course of the Scheldt. The Germans were entrenched behind the river. . . .

Coming into Baerlaere . . . we had come bang into the middle of the artillery duel. It was going on at a range of about a mile and a half, but all over our heads, so that though we heard it with great intensity, we saw nothing. . . .

It seems that the soldiers were not particularly pleased at our blundering up against their trench in our noisy car, which, they said, might draw down the German fire at any minute on the Belgian lines.

Thursday, 8th.

We are told that the Germans are really advancing on Ghent. We have orders to prepare to leave it at a minute's notice. . . . The British troops are pouring into Ghent. . . . Heavy fighting at Lokeren, between Ghent and St. Nicolas. . . . Driving through the town, I meet French troops pouring through the streets. There was very little cheering. . . From our street, in a blue, transparent sky . . . we saw a Taube hanging over Ghent. People came out of their houses and watched it with interest and a kind of amiable toleration.

Afternoon.

THE Commandant has taken me out with the Ambulance for the first time. . . . Half-way between Ghent and Lokeren we were told to go back at once, for the Germans were coming in. . . . We went on. . . . Down that quiet road and through the village, swerving into the rough, sandy track that fringed the paved street, a battery of Belgian artillery came clattering in full retreat. . . . I could see the faces of the men. . . . There was no terror in them, only a sort of sullen disgust. . . . Two Belgian stretcher-bearers, without a stretcher, rushed up to me. They said there was a man badly wounded in some house somewhere up the road. I found a stretcher and went off with them to look for him. . . .

Behind the plantation . . . a train came up from Lokeren with yet another load of wounded. And in the train there were confusion and agitation and fear. Belgian Red Cross men hung out by the doors of the train and clamoured excitedly for stretchers. . . . We three were surrounded and ordered to give up our stretcher. No use wasting time in hunting for one man, with the Germans on our backs. . . . My two stretcher-bearers were wavering badly. . . .

Then three women came out of a little house half-hidden by the plantation. They spoke low, for fear the Germans should overhear them. "He is here," they said. "He is here."

The man, . . . horribly hurt, . . . was a Flamand, clumsily built; he had a broad, ugly face, narrowing suddenly as the fringe of his whiskers became a little straggling beard. But to me he was the most beautiful thing I have ever seen, and I loved him. . . .

He was my first wounded man!

. . . . . .

We have heard that Antwerp is burning, that the Government is removed to Ostend, that all the English have left. . . .

Friday, 9th.

Towards one o'clock news came of heavy fighting. The battle is creeping nearer to us; it has stretched from Zele and Quatrecht to Melle, four and a half miles from Ghent. They are saying that the Germans may enter Ghent today, in an hour—half an hour! . . . We have heard that all the War Correspondents have been sent out of Ghent. . . .

Saturday, 10th.

WE ran into Melle about an hour before sunset. There had been a great slaughter of Germans on the field outside the village. . . .

On the other side of a turnip field were the German lines. . . . There are no more wounded. Only two Germans lying in a turnip field.

Those Germans never thought that they were going to be saved. They couldn't get over it—that two Englishwomen should have gone through their fire for them! As they were being carried through the fire, they said: "We shall never forget what you've done for us. God will bless you for it."

Bruges.

We took our wounded to the Convent, and set out to find quarters for ourselves in the town. . . . We had orders to clear out of Bruges. The Germans had taken Ghent and were coming on to Bruges. We had orders to go to Ostend. . . .

The *Kursaal* had been taken by some English and American women and turned into a hospital. . . . They found room for our wounded for the night. Ostend was to be evacuated in the morning. . . .



VERY READY TO GIVE A GOOD ACCOUNT OF THEMSELVES

The Naval Brigade, sent to Antwerp in a last effort to save the city, consisted of men handy enough to build their own defences and brave enough to defend them against any odds. Above are naval ratings who had taken their part in building the timber-lined trenches which the photograph in page 185 so well shows. The men are carrying cartridge belts for Maxim guns, their principal weapon. This line was held by the Naval Brigade until October 6, when they were forced to fall back on the inner fortifications.



LIVELY HORNET THAT STUNG THE GERMAN ARMY

One of the two armoured trains, the brilliant improvisation of a naval officer, Captain Littlejohn, to the exploits of which Mr. Jeffries refers in Chapter 39, is seen above. They flitted about the deserted railway lines round Antwerp, eluding all the German efforts to spot them, and giving their crews the happy experience of being a wholly unexpected thorn in the flesh of the German army. The photograph, taken from the locomotive which drew the train while it was actually in action, shows some of its armoured cars and a part of the engine itself.



Imperial War Museum

THEY ARE READY WITH MACHINE-GUN AND MASCOT TOO

Armoured cars played an important part in the British attempt to help in the defence of Antwerp. Here is one of the earlier type of armoured cars carrying a machine-gun without the protection of a turret, though the body of the driver is protected by armour plating up to the level of his face. The crew of this particular car, photographed in the streets of Antwerp, have acquired in the city a mascot in the shape of a small stray dog which makes himself quite at home among his new allies.



HOMELESS, FOR THE GERMANS ARE AT THEIR HEELS

It is of such pathetic scenes as this that Miss May Sinclair gives graphic word pictures in her vivid chapter on the flight of the people of Ghent to Antwerp. At the crossroad at Oudenarde a scene typifying the tragedy of a nation in retreat is shown. On the left is a village priest following his flock into exile. Red Cross men and a little party of soldiers march side by side with farm carts and wagons, filled with weeping women and terrified children, a few of their household goods around them, fleeing from the cruel tide of war which was yet to engulf them.



EYE-WITNESS AT ANTWERP
When war broke out the younger correspondents of newspapers were sent to the countries where fighting was not expected to be heavy. Mr. Jeffries, then a new member of the staff of the "Daily Mail," arrived in Brussels on August 3, 1914, and went back with the retreating Belgian Army to Antwerp.
Andrew Paterson, Inverness

DOOM OVER ANTWERP

I Witness a Nation's Exodus

by J. M. N. Jeffries
'Daily Mail' Correspondent, 1914–1933

THE utterly harrowing scenes which accompany the flight of a civilian population have never been more poignantly described than by Mr. Jeffries, who was representing his paper in Antwerp during the city's last hours. In the words of a master journalist he tells of the final attacks of the Germans, of Mr. Winston Churchill's effort to save the city, and of the despairing trek to refuge of the remnants of a nation

OCTOBER 5 was the last of Antwerp's hopeful nights, though courage kept up appearances on the following one. Everything really altered next day. By then our Naval Brigade had been reinforced to six thousand with fresh R.N.V.R. units, full of courage, but untrained and, as Mr. Churchill says, "incapable of manoeuvre." They were rushed to the front where, very soon, in the phraseology of communiqués, they were briskly engaged. How wonderful are these military expressions! "Briskly"—you would imagine that British and Germans had an alert wash-and-brush-up together. Though some of the R.N.V.R. till then had scarcely ever discharged rifles, they made good enough use of them. However, the Germans, forcing the river, got into shattered Lierre town. British and Belgians counter-attacked in the evening, drove the Germans back over the river. I went frontwards again, reached much the same position as on the previous day, and found the engagement much warmer.

AS the hours advanced there were signs of breaking and disorder amid the troops. At some bifurcation or cross-point close to the front on the Lierre road, Contich perhaps, or was it Linth? —memory is not very precise about it—there was great confusion, jamming of vehicles to and from the front, rearing of horses and shouts, ambulances involved with ammunition wagons, cars all honking and screaming at each other, with the prospect of enemy shells landing at any moment in the midst of the disorder, and no one to direct, no one to disentangle the jumble which grew worse every minute.

No one, that is to say, till a man jumped from a car and, hoisting himself to vantage upon some unseen pedestal or other, began to cry out at the mob in Anglo-French, and to point with vigorous, imperative gestures to this or that centre of the maelstrom. He was a remarkable and in that place an inexplicable figure, clad in a flowing dark blue cloak, clasped at the neck with silver lionheads or something of that sort, after the fashion of the cloaks worn by prelates in Rome, and this cloak fell in great folds from his stretched oratorical arm. But there was purpose in his gestures, and power in his voice, and under his direction cars and carts were unlocked from each other, and the traffic gradually sorted into streams.

The car in which I was fell into its own channel and went past with the others, but as I looked back he was still at his post, poised like a statue, watching till the order he had created was installed with durable momentum. It was Mr. Winston Churchill.

I DID not fail to mention this characteristic and valuable little piece of work, for valuable it was, in my telegram that evening. But all was forbidden appearance by the censors in London, even my identification in harmless pleasantry of the blue cloak (and I seem to remember there was a dark yachting-cap) as the active-service uniform of an Elder Brother of Trinity House. Its wearer must have been on his way then to confer, if he could reach him, with General Paris, who commanded the Naval Brigade, and was somewhere in action down Lierre way.

This brigade of Paris's held stubbornly to its rough-made positions. You could scarcely call these trenches; they were only defensive troughs. The British Brigade, too, was in continual danger of being outflanked and so of being cut off, owing to the weakening of resistance on its left. Resistance, indeed, was ebbing most definitely. As I crossed the fields again, I was aware of troops dropping back, dropping back. Uncertain of my own situation, and obliged to keep away from the roads which were no places to linger near, I skulked about close to the railway-line behind hedges. Suddenly there came the blast of resounding fire from near



CHURCHILL IN UNIFORM
The taste for unusual in uniforms which Mr. Winston Churchill showed at Antwerp was again displayed when he was in France in March 1916. He is here wearing a French steel helmet, a trench coat and sea boots.

at hand, and looking for the cause I saw an armoured-train, with guns *en branche*, steaming towards me. It halted, fired again. I ran towards it, and was obligingly hauled by a couple of Belgian officers who were standing at its open door into a goods-van or horse-van which formed the wooden tail of the metal train.

As I struggled in I saw the forms of some of our own sailors at the guns in the armoured trucks ahead. This train was an improvisation of an officer of the Royal Navy, ever at its most royal when ruling over difficulties. It had been assembled with the help of the Cockerill workshops in Antwerp. It was one of a pair, each bearing 4·7 naval guns in steel-plated trucks, with a couple of magazine-trucks attached, drawn by two engines. Lieutenant-Commander Littlejohns was its deviser and presided over one of his trains. The other was in charge of a Belgian, Captain Servais. Naval gunners manned both trains, assisted by Belgian volunteers.

These trains were, to say the least of it, widely known in defence circles, and had all sorts of names from " Le Rapide *Leet-le-jaw* "(i.e. Littlejohns *belgicé*) to " *le wagon-lit*." Somehow they maintained a seafaring character; they cruised all over the threatened Lierre hinterland, firing away indefatigably at the enemy. What is more, they eluded him persistently, despite all his kite-balloons, Zeppelins and aircraft. As soon as the Germans had got their range Littlejohns or Servais would tack up the railway-line and watch interestedly the shells detonating over their recent berth. If any instrument of war can be light-hearted this train was. When I was dragged on board to the grins of the watching seamen I found that its Belgian officers and men had absorbed the communicative naval manner.

ARMY THAT WAS TOO LATE

I STAYED up most of the night. Earlier in the evening there had been another Council of War at the Royal Palace, and the determination had been reached to fight on. King Albert, Mr. Churchill records, " preserved an unalterable majesty " in the face of untoward fortune. Hope endured still that an Anglo-French force would reach Antwerp from the coast within three days, in time to raise the siege. Some of our troops had already massed for the purpose in maritime Flanders, but the decision, or perhaps the opportunity, to form this army had come just too late. Time was lost in the passage of notes between England and France, in the technical preparations of transport, and in various facings and frontings soon made necessary by the German army's movement at the northward end of its line.

So the situation rushed into crisis at Antwerp. Our last offensive was taken that afternoon by two Belgian regiments, who, at the bayonet's point, drove the Germans established on the near bank back across the Nèthe. Part of the newly arrived Naval Brigade attacked at their side. But there was much confusion and a lack of co-ordination. I cull from the official history of the Marines during the war the acid statement that " there appear to have been present a number of unofficial staff-officers and politicians who attached themselves to the staff and gave orders to the troops." I do not think this is intended for Mr. Churchill, who as First Lord of the Admiralty could hardly be described as unofficial. If it were so intended it would be unjust, for he only gave orders when it was a question of his orders or of none at all and after he had conferred with General Deguise and had obtained his agreement and his leave.

In any case, this effort of the Belgians could not be renewed. The sweet fibre of Allied support drew out, thinned to

FIRST THE RIFLE, THEN COLD STEEL

The Belgian Army showed extraordinary bravery and tenacity in the defence of Antwerp. Here men of an infantry regiment are lining the banks of the Nèthe, peppering the German positions with incessant rifle fire, while across the river the smoke of a burning village goes up. These men could use cold steel as well as the rifle, and Mr. Jeffries relates in this chapter how, with an heroic charge, they drove the Germans back in hand to hand fighting across the Nèthe in a last desperate effort to save the city.

Photopress



spun-sugar and melted in the flames of burning Lierre, which I stood and watched from an hotel roof or some such eyrie. Towards midnight the Germans re-established themselves over the Nèthe, crossing near the town, at Duffel, at many points.

They swam over ; they came with machine-guns in pontoons ; it was the swarm of definite occupation this time. The exhausted defenders fell back, fell away. Yet I remember that even in that final hour Antwerp showed a brave face. Some vain few hundred reinforcements marched that night through the streets ; I met them on my way to the " Pilotage" where headquarters were. They passed through the dark, unlit, blinded city to the sound of fifes, and thousands of cheering shadows came out to greet them.

I had returned before then towards Contich, to encounter wounded, stragglers and whole sections of fugitives. Artillery were cantering in with caissons and such equipment, but officerless and gunless, having lost commanders and pieces, answering enquiry about them, "Sais pas . . . ils sont allés fiche." It was a sort of rout.

The Germans were getting cavalry over the river [the river Nèthe]. Another fort, Broechem, fell. When its commander had taken it over he had found that if he were to open rapid fire, without intermission, there was but a quarter of an hour's supply of ammunition for his main armament and six minutes' supply for his flanking! The outer defence was non-existent now, and the Germans were attacking strongly at Termonde, to cut off all retreat over the Scheldt from the forces in Antwerp. The inner forts still remained, but they could do no more than the outer had done, and now Termonde in its need began to cry out for reinforcements.

KING ALBERT held a last council and gave orders for the field-army to evacuate the city while the bridges over the Scheldt were still intact at Tamise and Hoboken, before the enemy could bring up his guns. He acted in the nick of time. Termonde was taken next day. But the army already had begun to withdraw through the corridor between Termonde and the Dutch frontier, and most of it made good its withdrawal before the Germans advanced across the three roads and two railway-lines of the corridor which led to Bruges or to Ghent. That night the members of the Government took ship for Ostend. Mr. Churchill went by motor through the corridor to the same town. Civilians left the city by the western roads or by the northern towards Holland in steady, melancholy streams.



AT ALL COSTS THE GUNS MUST DO THEIR WORK

The fierce onslaught of the German army on Termonde to cut off the line of retreat from Antwerp across the Scheldt, referred to in this page, was met with that stubborn determination to defend the Mother Country that the Belgian army had shown from the first moment that enemy soldiers crossed the frontiers. Termonde must be defended ; the guns must have a clean sweep, so down comes this fine old arch.

The First Lord had to support, soon afterwards in England, very bitter attacks for his intervention, for his optimistic endeavour to save a hopeless situation, for his risking of British prestige. But he knew more about prestige than the whole pack of his critics. Their idea was to preserve prestige in a showcase, as though it were a museum-piece ; he saw that prestige must be brought into use instantly, the moment the first great risk appears. The silk colours of regiments are placed in the cathedrals ; prestige is the one banner left to the nation that can lead its soldiers into action.

THE ONLY MAN WHO TRIED

IT is true that Mr. Churchill told the Burgomaster of Antwerp : " We are going to save the city," and failed to save it. But in Belgium he is remembered not as the man who failed but as the only man who tried to succeed. As for practical results, since the German forces did not occupy Antwerp till the 9th, six days were gained by his stand as against the earlier intended evacuation on the 3rd, during which time the western end of Belgium was sealed, Dunkirk protected from enemy occupation, and the sea was secured as the left flank of the Allied armies.

WE quitted Antwerp between ten and eleven, a little group of five persons in the end. . . . I had had to abandon my luggage, naturally, and it perished when later in the day the bombardment was resumed and my hotel was struck and set on fire. I had a few articles in a sort of emigrant's roll. . . .

We walked past the shipping at our slow gait as though officially inspecting all that we owned there before it passed out of our possession. It was melancholy to see the quantity of vessels lying so trimly at their moorings, ready filed, as it were, for insertion in the prize-lists of the invader.

Away before us a stream of fugitives stretched to the village of Eeckeren, three miles beyond. To the right, over more bare country, flowed another great stream of mankind. Seen from afar this was so sombre and moved so little that it had the likeness of

something cut deep into the soil, of some vast drain. From where we stood I could judge the hours which must pass before we ourselves made junction with it. The day would be growing dark before our united ooze of forlorn mankind could gain the woods next to Eeckeren, whence I could perceive even now a further deadwater of flight stretching to the region which lay about the frontier.

THE number of those departing was so great that I gave no thought to estimating it. If huge crowds had fled the city I might have tried to reckon how many they were. But what I perceived now was not a mere escape or withdrawal of huge crowds. Departure was universal. Antwerp was like a box which had been opened and its population had fallen out of it.

Alexander Powell, the American correspondent, who saw the German entry into the abandoned city, describes that extraordinary scene, taken as from legend, with the regiments tramping in step and the bands playing through streets where there was no one left to watch or to listen, and the glass from the broken windows lay on the deserted footways.

Another writer at the time declared that only five thousand persons were left in Antwerp. Suppose he exaggerated and ten times that remained, what were they out of three hundred thousand ?

The composition of the long array of fugitives, in the middle-distance, as I watched, where the outlines could just be distinguished of men and women, of laden vehicles and of animals, gave it the appearance of a nation upon the move. That appearance, too, answered to fact.

THE continual shrinking of Belgian territory because of the advance of the foe had forced the population from town to town, till in Antwerp to its own inhabitants there had come an influx drawn from all the sources of that small but thickly settled land. These were mostly those peasants and humble townsfolk who are their country's fundamental stock, and all unknowingly hold the recipe of its character. In Antwerp, more than in Brussels, the race had taken refuge. Now it was driven forth again and with its primitive belongings was plodding into exile. No wonder then that the unbroken press before me, wherein old-style chariots and improvised litters and herds were all mingled, made me think of the Israelites and of Exodus.

These thoughts soon were chased by my own difficulties of the moment. With the ever-recurring recollection in my mind of the telegram which I must send somehow to London, I tried, with my companions, to progress through the throng about us. This was a scarcely conceivable task. The road on which we were may have been some fifteen yards across, from containing hedges on the right to the track on the left of one of those half-trams, half-trains which run along so many of the highways of Belgium. But this space in itself was broken up into a central breadth of *pavé*, hard and irregular to the foot with its innumerable stone-bricks, and two stone-edged paths on either side, three yards or so broad. It was further complicated by trees in the middle of the paths and by the twelve-inch drop from paths to *pavé*.

TRUDGING, SHAMBLING MOB

IF there had been an ordinary large crowd on this road it would have been excessively fatiguing to slip through it, veering about, changing level all the time, swerving under elbows, cutting in and out, knocking against the kerb or the iron rails—and to go on doing this for miles. But now that the road was filled with the flight, to penetrate it became exhausting in ten minutes, and after as much time I would abandon the effort and would drop into the step-by-step trudge of the throng, and would jerk, shamble and halt with everyone else, till again I felt equal to pushing through quarter-made gaps, to stumbling between cows and crooking at an angle round tree-trunks, only to be beaten once more by the exertion, to fall into my uneasy socket, and then to begin again and to fail and to re-begin.

All the time the afflictions of the route encompassed me. Most of the fugitives paced along sadly, their gaze on the ground or lost in the distance. Here and there were riders, bareback or on rough farm-saddles, limp-shouldered from their eternal jog, their heads as bent as their horses'. Enormous wagons occupied half the road, bearing twenty, twenty-five, thirty persons pent in a heap, girls huddled listlessly together upon heaps of bedding, aged brown women like shrunk walnuts, buried in shawls, children fitfully asleep, shaken and querulous, and babies crying interminably. There were no cars ; no car could have stood the rate of progress without its driver going mad ; and it was a poor people's march.

But there were bicycles with shapeless, angular or bloated bundles fixed to them, protruding on either side of the wheels, lolloping insecurely, or else slung and ever slipping and calling for readjustment ; and some had a little child tied to the saddle, pushed by its patient father on and on, stop and go, stop and go, endlessly. Perambulators, too, were filled with children, and with children on whom clothes and linen had been piled because of need of space, or who were a little older and could manage to carry clocks or boxes in their arms. Sons wheeled old fathers along in wheelbarrows, and strong men were carrying (for how long ?) chairs slung from their shoulders in which daughters or wives, ill or with child, sat gripping the arms of the chair rigidly. Led horses with household goods strapped to their backs or even bearing hen-coops as panniers made their heavy way along.

All such issued from the mass of plodders, of men leaning on sticks, of couples arm-linked for support, of families irregularly strung out ; mixed with whom again was a surf and an undersurf of domestic beasts, clogging every pore of progress ; bevies of wretched hoof-weary baa-ing sheep ; dogs barking distractedly ; bellowing cattle in droves. To their din was joined the exasperating, ceaseless jingle and twang of the bells of city cyclists, who, until towards dark they learned sense or learned hopelessness, were for ever making yard-starts, turning a pedal once, ringing violently—as though there were any chance of way being made for them there !—subsiding awkwardly on to one leg, colliding with walkers, or with dogs which yelped at the impact.

WEEPING AS THEY WALKED

SOME of the legions of dogs dragged little carts ; others trotted cowed between the wheels of a wagon ; others were bunched upon its straw-piled top with cats and goats and with three or as many as four generations of a family.

Numbers of women cradled cats in their arms, and I walked awhile alongside two who carried between them a sort of laundry-bundle out of the top of which peeped the head of a pathetic little wastrel of a pup. The bundle swung back and forth ; the women cried silently as they walked. A couple of others had a cat, swinging similarly, but in a curtain tied or sewn about it, from which the miaowing cat kept trying to wriggle away.

The awful slowness of movement wore out the soul. Hundreds upon hundreds gave up, flung themselves down by the roadside or formed camps amid the trees by the border, so that the roadway became twice congested and the moving flood was dammed in long delays.

As I had reckoned only too well, evening came on while we were still in its midst. The campers pulled boughs from the trees and kindled fires, and as we came up out of the darkness and approached each fire I saw the sleepers lying side by side and over upon each other, stacked near the warmth; in their midst a seated figure or two, hands collapsed in lap, face dumb with perplexity and with the wrong of everything, gazing unregardfully at the multitude which went swaying into the further darkness beyond.

ABOUT then individuals here and there began to light lanterns, and candles also, both because of the obscurity and because many had brought the blessed candles which they kept in their homes to be lit on feast-days, or in any emergency. Now, therefore, with their candles held in their hands, they passed on twinkling like a pilgrimage, as though in this extremity they had turned their steps finally towards the one sure bourne of God.

Their state, of course, had worsened with the lengthening day, through growth of fatigue and through want of food. Perhaps half of them had brought food with them, but what they had brought they had generally shared lavishly, so that no one had eaten much at all. Water to quench the thirst occasioned by the heat of the morning and by the turmoil and the dust was still harder to come by. An extraordinary sight stays in my mind still, seen when I had struggled forward to learn the cause of a long halt in the ranks. In mid-roadway was a group of women, all clothed in black, leaning humped together, as the old masters draw women at the foot of the Cross, and moaning in unison like Jews under the walls of Jerusalem, crying: "Donnez-nous à boire! Sainte Vierge, donnez-nous à boire!"

Sometime in the evening we reached the frontier of Holland, ten miles away . . . I dispatched my telegram, an outline of the day's events.



Central Press



FLIGHT FROM A PITILESS FOE

The bitter tears of her women and children were part of the price that Belgium paid for her gallant resistance. From the surrounding country the people had fled to Antwerp, but soon Antwerp, too, must fall, and they must flee their country. In the upper photograph a baby is being handed down on to the last tug to leave Antwerp before the city fell. The tragic family seen in the lower photograph has crossed the border into Holland in a rough cart. The aged man, his worn and weary daughters, the tragic figure of the child seated on bundles containing all that could be saved of the home, make an unforgettable picture of the horrors of war.

ANTWERP ADVENTURE: Shells and Burning Oil

by Rev. Canon H. Clapham Foster, M.A.

Temporary Chaplain to the Royal Navy

THE author of this lively account of the stand made by the British Naval Division in the defence of Antwerp was a padre attached to the 2nd Naval Brigade. As such he shared the adventures of the men, and most graphically describes the heroic resistance which ended in inevitable retirement

THE news that we were to leave immediately for France spread very quickly round the camp, and among the men there was a scene of boundless enthusiasm; loud cheers were raised as they hastily dressed and got their kits together. There was no time to lose. Breakfast was at seven a.m., and at eight we were told the transport would be ready to convey our baggage to Dover.

The Second Royal Naval Brigade started on the march to the pier at about nine a.m., amid scenes of great enthusiasm, two brass bands and a drum and fife band accompanying them. . . . The men selected some curious words for their own special "marching songs," and these are, as a rule, set to familiar melodies. It would have astonished, not to say shocked, the Salvation Army had they heard the following words sung to a hymn tune when passing a public-house:

There's a man selling beer over there;
There's a man selling beer over there;
Over there, over there, over there, over there—
There's a man selling beer over there.

Another favourite ditty with men on the march is a song with a somewhat unsavoury refrain:

Wash me in the water
Where you wash your dirty daughter,
And I shall be whiter than the white-wash on the wall.

This song is sung by all regiments, and it would be interesting to find out who originally invented it.

Singing such ditties as these, we marched from Betteshanger to Dover. We were accorded a magnificent reception in the streets by crowds of people who cheered lustily and waved flags and handkerchiefs as we made our way to the pier. . . . At about five o'clock our men commenced the somewhat dreary task of getting the baggage on board. We took with us, besides "field kit," our base kit, and first-line-of-transport kit. At about 9.30 we were ready to sail, so well had the men worked. . . .

In a short time we were under way and slowly sailing out of Dover Harbour. It was a strange, not to say uncanny, sensation to be leaving one's native land on active service for the first time. . . .

Our escort, consisting of two destroyers, kept close to us during the whole of the night. The voyage, however,

THEY REMEMBERED THEY WERE BRITISH

Here are men of the Eastbourne (Sussex) Division of the R.N.V.R. forming "D" Coy. of the Howe Battalion, 2nd R.N. Brigade, whose brave part in the defence of Antwerp is described by Canon Foster in this chapter. They are in a street at Vieux Dieu, an eastern suburb of Antwerp, before taking their action stations in the trenches. The Union Jack carried by one of them may be taken as a proof that they meant to fulfil the exhortation of their commanding officer recorded by Mr. Foster: "Remember you are British!"

Imperial War Museum



proved to be uneventful, and at about 4 a.m. on Monday, October 5, we anchored off Dunkerque.

For eight weary hours we lay off Dunkerque, awaiting orders, in a choppy sea. At last a French destroyer came alongside and a somewhat portly French naval officer shouted through a megaphone that we were " to proceed into harbour " and moor at the quay. It was just about noon when we entered.

Those were stirring days—the " Tipperary " days we might call them—and the war was but two months old. The cheers from troops and civilians on shore, re-echoed by a thousand throats on our transport, stirred the emotions, and will live in the memories of those who heard them to the end of life. But the most moving incident of all was when our brass band came up on deck and played the " Marseillaise " ; nothing delighted the French more than this little compliment, and they cheered again and again as the ship moored at the quay.

OUR actual destination, so far, had been unknown, but on getting to the quay we were told that we were to entrain for Antwerp immediately, to take part in the defence of the city.

The first train did not leave the quay until 10.45 p.m., with the Nelson and Howe battalions. We had but little food, and that consisted of bully beef and biscuits, with nothing to drink.

Each man received 120 rounds of ammunition before getting into the train, and our Commandant, Lieut.-Colonel George Cornwallis West, addressed us. He said there was a possibility of the train being attacked in the night, that it was uncertain as to whether or not the railway line had been cut by the Germans. " Remember you are British," he said in conclusion, " and I am sure you will give a good account of yourselves." A tremendous cheer greeted this remark, and it echoed and re-echoed through the lofty sheds on the quay.

THE men, weary with their labours and the long wait, tumbled into the troop train with evident joy, in spite of the fact that the journey might be fraught with danger and uncertainty . . . At about 2 a.m. on Tuesday, October 6, we crossed the Belgian frontier. At all the smaller stations on the line, in spite of the early hour, crowds had turned out to greet us. At the more important stations, such as Dixmude and Thielt, large numbers of people brought the men presents of fruit and cakes. . . . Sometimes the train would stop out in the country, where there was no station near, but from a small cottage an old peasant woman would come tripping out with a monstrous jug of hot coffee, with which she regaled the men. All along the line we received the same royal reception.

. . . . . .

There were signs about 9 a.m. that we were drawing near to a large and important town. So far our journey had been passed amidst peaceful surroundings, but now, as we looked out of the carriage windows, we saw quite plainly the first signs that a war was really being waged. Shrapnel could be seen bursting quite distinctly in the vicinity of Antwerp, and two captive balloons were up in the sky directing the German fire. Hundreds of Belgians were busily engaged, on both sides of the line, in constructing entrenchments, and many fields had been flooded to put a check on the German advance.

. . . . . .

The Marine Brigade of the Royal Naval Division, composed almost entirely of regular troops, had reached Antwerp on the night of October 3. Never have war-worn warriors been more delighted to be relieved than were the Belgians when the Marines took over the trenches facing Lierre, and enabled them to get a much-needed and well-deserved rest. Armoured trains, with gun-crews formed of British bluejackets, got into action on October 4 and did excellent work. We of the 1st and 2nd Naval Brigades were due to enter Antwerp on the evening of October 5, but the unfortunate delay at Dunkerque meant that we arrived some twelve hours late.

OCTOBER 6, the very day on which we arrived in Antwerp, was a momentous day in the history of " the second strongest fortress in Europe," and what happened then really brought about the fall of the city earlier than the Belgians expected.

During the day, after a fluctuating night engagement, the exhausted Belgians were driven back by the enemy in a furious assault from the direction of Lierre, backed by powerful artillery. The Marine Brigade, which had continued to hold its position most gallantly and against overwhelming



Daily Mirror

STOUT BUT FRUITLESS DEFENCES FOR ANTWERP

The fighting at Antwerp was the forerunner of the great feats of arms that were to be performed by the R.N.D. throughout the war. Great numbers of the men were volunteers with but their brief annual training to fit them for their first taste of war, but they were imbued with the true spirit of the Royal Navy—they were handy men indeed. Here they are at work strengthening the emplacements, seen also in page 175, which fate decreed they were to occupy for but a few brief hours.



HIS CITY LOST, BUT NOT HIS CIVIC PRIDE

One of the last to leave Antwerp when its fall was inevitable was the Burgomaster, and in this little procession he, with his escort, a sorrowful but dignified picture, is passing through the streets of Ghent on his way to the coast, receiving the sympathetic salutes of British and Belgian soldiers. On the left is one of Commander Samson's famous armoured Rolls-Royce cars which played a valuable part during the retreat.

Photopress

odds, was unable to do anything else but follow suit.

It will be seen, therefore, that the 1st and 2nd Naval Brigades really arrived too late to attempt to save Antwerp, because the Germans had now established themselves on ground from which they were able to bombard the city with their powerful howitzers with the greatest ease, to meet which we had only the few naval guns at our disposal and the small guns on the forts in the inner ring. . . .

We arrived in Antwerp shortly before 10 a.m. on Tuesday, October 6. We were met at a suburban station by the civic guard and several important officials—and then came our march through the streets. It is impossible to say whether or not the people looked upon us as the saviours of their city, but we shall never forget the reception they gave us. Charming Belgian maidens pinned little flags made of silk on to our tunics, and attempted to embrace two of our officers, greatly to their embarrassment and confusion. Large jugs of light beer were brought out of houses, from which the men filled anything that would hold liquid. The scene was one of indescribable enthusiasm, but all the time the distant boom of guns sounded on our ears, and seemed to strike a warning note, telling us that, though it was fine then, the storm might burst at any moment. We marched about four miles to a place on the outskirts of the city, where we had a most welcome rest. The officers were billeted out for their meals to various houses.

I found myself in a house where the only occupants appeared to be three old ladies, who could not speak a word of English. I made them understand, however, that I was ravenously hungry; the table was quickly set, and I was provided with a delicious omelette and some fried ham, with a bottle of light beer to wash it down. Afterwards, feeling in need of a sleep, I went upstairs to a bedroom and was soon in peaceful slumber, in spite of the boom of guns, which every hour seemed to be drawing nearer.

After a glorious sleep of about two hours, I was suddenly awakened by a loud knocking at the door and a voice shouting something in Flemish. The voice sounded rather agitated, and I expected at least that the enemy had broken through, and that a German officer was about to walk upstairs and demand my instant surrender! It transpired, however, that the Brigade had fallen in and was about to move off. Rested and refreshed, we marched away, amidst renewed cheering, to further excitement.

A march of some five miles brought us to the village of Vieux-Dieu, a quaint spot on the confines of the city. . . Here we halted and were told that we were to rest a short time before going up to the firing line. . . .

We were told that we were to be quartered for the night in an old château, standing in its own grounds and surrounded by trees. There was abundant evidence that its occupants had been wealthy people, and that they had fled away in haste. There was a quantity of valuable furniture, and we found everything just as its late owner had left it.

We ascertained that one of the servants belonging to the house was still at her home in the village, and after a good deal of persuasion we succeeded in getting her to come and cook some supper for us. . . . Those of us who are still alive will not readily forget the scene in that old room of the château. There we sat round the table, a light being supplied by a candle stuck securely in the neck of an empty bottle, eating like the gourmands who haunt Simpson's

in the Strand and other famous eating-houses. Plates and forks were scarce, but pocket-knives came in exceedingly handy. The windows had been plastered up with brown paper so as not to let out a single streak of light.

There sat such well-known personages as Lieut.-Colonel George Cornwallis West, Arthur Asquith, Denis Browne and Rupert Brooke, eating pieces of veal with their fingers and drinking coffee out of tumblers and milk jugs.

At the bottom of the garden which surrounded this château was one of the Antwerp forts, and so sleep was practically impossible, as the guns were cracking out every few minutes, shaking the house to its very foundations. Not far off the six-inch naval guns were also speaking with no uncertain voice, while every now and then the whistle of the enemy's shells was distinctly heard, followed by the sound of distant explosions.

TRENCHES AND FORTS USELESS

AT 2 a.m. next day (Wednesday, October 7) we were awakened by a Belgian officer . . . and were told to fall in at once and leave for the front trenches. We had a most romantic march in the darkness to Fort No. 7, one of the forts on the inner ring. It was a calm, still night, and the men marched along quietly, having been warned of the serious nature of the task in front of them. . . . At dawn we reached our destination and for the first time saw the trenches that were to be our home for only two days. These open trenches had been cleverly constructed by the Belgians, but they would have proved utterly useless had they been subjected to a violent bombardment. They linked up the forts of the inner ring, which were fifty years old and mounted with inferior Krupp guns.

. . . . . .

Our trenches were at the end of a large turnip field, and about 150 yards behind them there was a modern villa, surrounded by a pretty garden. It was empty and devoid of furniture, and in this house the doctor and I were installed and were told to transform it into a hospital. . . . A meal was just about to be prepared in the kitchen of our new home, when the Fleet Surgeon came to tell us to clear out of it immediately, because as a hospital it was quite unsafe, and might be shelled at any moment.

. . . . . .

We took up our abode finally in a bomb-proof shelter, or dug-out, some twelve feet long by six feet wide, the roof being formed of steel plates an inch thick laid on strong iron girders.

It was a pitch dark night and very cold. . . . Suddenly the alarm was given and our men opened fire. I went out into the open and watched. There were our men blazing away and peering into the inky blackness of the night. Shells began to burst all round us. I only just had time to run under cover when a shrapnel shell burst over us. . . .

No one can say definitely what happened, except that some Deutschers had evidently crossed the river and were detected while making a reconnaissance. . . . There were several other alarms along the line held by the Naval Division during the night, but the fighting never actually got to close quarters.

During the first surprise attack, seven Belgian gunners in the fort close to us were killed. We were fortunate in having very few casualties, and they were mainly slight shrapnel wounds. . . . The men had kept remarkably cool during a trying experience, and were only disappointed that no opportunity for using their bayonets had come their

HIGH HOPES DOOMED TO DISAPPOINTMENT

It was a bitter disappointment to the Naval Brigade, as related in the personal narrative in this chapter, to find that they were too late to save Antwerp. Here are naval machine-gun cars in a square at Antwerp, spick and span, manned by men who asked nothing better than to meet the enemy. They had come to save Antwerp, and with hearts undaunted wanted only to fight. Round them were admiring throngs of Belgians, confident that the British sailors would save them: but to all these hopes the answer was "too late."

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way. The brunt of the Antwerp fighting came undoubtedly on the Marines, and it is impossible to speak too highly of the courage and bravery they displayed while holding their part of the line against the repeated onslaughts of the enemy. They were called upon to stand and face heavier shelling than either of the two Naval brigades, and their grit and devotion to duty set us all a noble example.

WHEN Thursday, October 8, dawned, both officers and men looked exhausted and fagged out. Stores were getting somewhat low, and for breakfast we had each a tin mug of coffee, one biscuit, a piece of bread, and a small bit of cheese.

. . . . . .

It was evident that the German artillery had advanced considerably nearer during the night. I went up into an observation post and saw quite distinctly, with the aid of field-glasses, German gunners getting a heavy gun into position. The scream of shells overhead never ceased, and we got so accustomed to it as not to notice it.

. . . . . .

Shortly after midday dense clouds of black smoke began to ascend into the sky, darkening the sun and the whole horizon for miles, until it began to be more like evening than noonday. Inquiry elicited the fact that these huge columns of smoke came from the petroleum tanks at Hoboken, which had been set ablaze by the Belgians themselves in order to prevent the Germans getting hold of one of the largest stores of petroleum in the world.

DAYS OF DESPAIR

MEANWHILE, the sound of the German guns seemed to have come closer, and shells began to burst unpleasantly near. . . . Some parts of the line held by the Naval Division suffered heavier bombardment than others, but so far, luckily for us, most of the shells were, as the men put it, "non-stop for Antwerp."

It is, perhaps, somewhat difficult for those who were not there to imagine the utter hopelessness and despair of the men who had been sent with the intention of defending Antwerp. Unknown to us, the fate of Antwerp was decided before we arrived.

We had absolutely nothing with which we could reply to the German siege batteries. All that we could do seemed to be to wait as calmly as we could for the end.

About five o'clock darkness was setting in. Antwerp was seen to be on fire in some quarters. Our baggage party arrived and said that the railway station at Wilryck, in which our baggage had been stored, was in flames. This tragic piece of news made many an officer draw a long face as he proceeded to enumerate the various articles of value he had tucked away in his valise, which he was never to see again.

The doctor and I had been sitting in our dug-out for a time, wondering what would happen next, when the drum-major put his head in at one of the openings and exclaimed in a low tone: "We have to clear out immediately, sir, as we are almost cut off on all sides, and they intend using their heavy guns against us tonight."

OUR men loathed the idea of a retreat, but the majority realized that every minute the position was becoming more critical and that immediate retreat was our only hope of escaping capture.

Almost all the Belgians had gone, except those in the forts, and in our covering fort only one Belgian gunner remained. One of our naval gun crews gallantly offered to remain and work

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DARKENING THE SKY AT NOONDAY

One of the cruel necessities forced upon a people whose frontiers have been crossed by an invading enemy is destruction in their own country. Bridges must be blown up and relics of the past ruthlessly hurled to the ground, as seen in page 181. Here is a different scene hardly less tragic related in this chapter. A great store of petrol in Hoboken, a town on the Scheldt about eight miles from Antwerp, has been fired by the retreating Belgians. Across the river can be seen a huge column of smoke and flame that in peace time would portend a major disaster, but is now a measure of safety.

the guns in order to cover our retreat, which they did up to the very last minute. . . .

In order to cross the Scheldt, we were forced to pass by the blazing petroleum tanks at Hoboken. The road was narrow, but it was the only road left. The fumes were overpowering and the intense heat proved too much for some of the men. The flames at times blew right across the road, and large German shells were falling in amongst the tanks at the rate of four a minute. Sometimes a shell would burst with a terrific report in the boiling oil, and flames shot up to the height of two hundred feet.

As we approached the blazing tanks it was like entering the infernal regions. The burning oil had flooded a field on one side of the road and dead horses and cattle were frizzling in it.

"Now, boys," shouted an officer, "keep your heads and run through it!"

And we did—but I don't know how we did it. Once we had got past the oil tanks we were in comparative safety for a hundred yards because the road was sheltered, but then for some thousand yards it was exposed again to the enemy's fire.

We were ordered to run at the double over this bit of road, and most of us were fortunate enough to reach the pontoon bridge over the river. A spy was caught by one of our battalions in the act of trying to blow up this bridge, but his designs were frustrated just in time, and a bayonet ended his career.

Sentries were posted at intervals while we went across, and shouted "Change your step!" every few yards. At last we were safely on the other side and breathed again. The relief felt by all ranks on getting across the river can hardly be imagined, and, although even there we were by no means out of danger, yet we knew that a most important step had been taken.



INGLORIOUS END OF THE ANTWERP ADVENTURE

Not all the men of the Naval Brigade got safely away from Antwerp. Nearly 1,500 crossed into Holland and were interned at Gröningen. Above, men of the R.N.V.R. are settling down for four years in a concentration camp. Below is the last train to leave Antwerp on October 9 and get safely away. Luckily for those who could only find seats on the roofs of the carriages there were no tunnels to be passed through. The next train was attacked by the Germans and most of the passengers were captured.

Sport & General, and Imperial War Museum







BETWEEN TWO BATTLEFIELDS — FROM AISNE TO YPRES

With these photographs we reach a new stage in our "progress": the beginnings of the terrible stalemate and the long, bloody struggle round the Ypres salient. In October 1914, after the Allied position on the Aisne had become fixed and the fighting line was being gradually extended north, the British Army was withdrawn from the Aisne and moved to north-west Flanders, there to begin the First Battle of Ypres. Above, a Highland Regiment, with pipes playing, is passing through the peaceful countryside from its place of detrainment towards the line, while, left, the 11th Hussars, also bound for Ypres sector, make a midday halt at Bonnières, October 9, 1914.

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SECTION VI

The First Battle of Ypres

Oct. 14 — Nov. 11, 1914

DURING the early days of October 1914 the British Expeditionary Force was removed from the land-locked line of the Aisne to the neighbourhood of Ypres in Belgium. ¶ The heroism with which its battalions fought to stem the German onrush is, in this section of our work, magnificently described by four officers, Captain Brownlow, Captain Needham, Lt.-Col. the Hon. R. G. A. Hamilton and Captain Stacke, while Private H. J. Polley tells his story from the ranker's point of view. ¶ The Territorial battalions began to arrive at the front, and the first gallant action of the London Scottish is recounted by Mr Herbert de Hamel. ¶ At the same time the British Navy met a major disaster in the tragedy of Coronel, which is recorded by a survivor, Sick Berth Steward J. D. Stephenson.

*** 41 October 14—November 11, 1914**

LIGHTNING GLIMPSES in the BREAKING STORM

by Capt. C. A. L. Brownlow, D.S.O.

WHEN we arrived at Zelobes [just west of Vieille Chapelle] there were billeted in and about the village some regiments of French cavalry. On October 14 (1914) I witnessed one of the most dramatic incidents I have ever seen. The morning was fine, and the sun was shining fitfully through angry, ragged clouds as I walked along a muddy lane which led to our billet. Turning a bend in the road I saw a spectacle which made me rub my eyes and wonder if I had not suddenly been transported to Napoleonic times. There, standing at a cross-roads about a hundred yards ahead, was a group of officers in the magnificent uniform of the French Cuirassiers—curved metal helmets with flowing horsehair tails, burnished cuirasses that flashed in the sunlight, gold sword-belts, red breeches and black polished thigh boots.

The group consisted of a general, two colonels, and some staff officers, and all bore decorations on their breasts which added to the splendour of their uniforms. They were on foot and were in deep consultation over a map. Close by their horses champed their bits and pawed the ground impatiently. As I passed an officer called to me and asked if I could give him any information as to the British line. I pulled out a map and explained what I knew of our dispositions. Just as I had finished the general exclaimed:

"Lieutenant C. has not arrived yet?"

"No, mon Général."

"He is late—late!" and he tapped his foot on the ground.

Suddenly someone cried out, "V'là—he comes!" and all eyes were turned on the road, where we saw approaching us an officer on a horse. As he got closer I saw that he was a young man, that his uniform was covered with mud and his cuirass tinged with rust, and that his horse was exhausted and flecked with foam and blood. He drew up, saluted, dismounted very slowly, and, holding out an envelope, said with an effort:

"The message, mon Général."

As he did so his face, which had been white and set, turned ashen, he staggered and fell to the ground before that splendid group of men. In the back of his cuirass was a jagged hole, from which thick blood was slowly oozing.

On October 17 we moved forward to Rouge Croix. Everywhere we saw signs of the recent bitter fighting—shattered houses, shell holes and hasty entrenchments. At one spot a sort of nest had been scooped in the ground below a hedge, which had served as the lair of a German sniper. One could see

PASSING OF THE PAGEANTRY OF WAR

Here is such a scene as made Captain Brownlow rub his eyes, for it seemed to carry him back from 1914 to 1814, when armies were as gorgeously arrayed in the field as they were on parade. The khaki-clad battery as it approaches Zelobes is being overtaken by a squadron of French Cuirassiers, still wearing shining helmets with horsehair tails similar to those of Napoleon's cavalry. They were later to be discarded for the less picturesque but more serviceable tin hats.





THEIR MOTTO IS 'EVERYWHERE,' AND ALWAYS THEY WERE TRUE TO IT

There could be no more appropriate motto for the Royal Engineers than that which they bear, " Ubique " (Everywhere), for wherever an Army goes, great or small, they must go too, blowing up bridges in retreat and re-building them when the time to advance again comes. Often this and every other variety of their work is done under galling fire. Here is a pontoon train passing through Vieux Berquin, four miles from Hazebrouck. Each wagon carries one pontoon with the other bridging material piled inside it.

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INDIA WAS THERE

With wonder and admiration the French people saw such fine soldiers as these come to their help. The magnificently mounted Lancers above, with their turbans, the pennons of their lances fluttering in the air, and the sturdy Gurkhas below, were typical of the 70,000 men, the flower of the Indian army, who marched through Marseilles towards the front in the autumn of 1914.

the worn marks of the soft earth where he had rested his rifle and his elbow, and in the grass on one side was a pile of empty cartridges, nearly 600 in number. Behind one house was a stiff mass of dead men and horses, where some lucky shooting of our howitzers had spread sudden death among the sheltering teams of an enemy battery.

The next day we moved to Fauquissart. To the east of this village the ground rises gently to a swell of land now known as the Aubers ridge, from the village of that name on it. At this time our line ran from Fromelles by Herlies to near the west of La Bassée, which was still held by the enemy. Our battery positions were just to the east of Aubers village. One day, when taking ammunition up to the batteries, as I was approaching the village of Aubers the enemy started shelling it with field howitzers.



EAST MEETS WEST IN FRANCE L.N.A.

Many an officer and man of the British Army who had served in India had experiences similar to that which Captain Brownlow describes in this chapter and saw in the mist and mud of Flanders famous regiments that they had last seen in the sunshine of India. A good many men of the B.E.F. had served in the East and could make themselves understood by the men of the Indian contingent. In the bleak air of Europe in autumn men of both East and West found a glass of hot French coffee much to their liking.

Heavy, evil clouds of yellow smoke appeared above the church and house tops, and the detonations struck rudely on the ear. Suddenly from the village down the road up which I was making my way there swept a torrent of panic-stricken refugees, who had been sheltering in the village.

Each individual was fighting a way forward in the confused human mass, all were panting from exhaustion, and in all their eyes was the fixed and startled look of the fear of death.

On passing through the village I learned that a terrible event had occurred. It was a Sunday, and many of the refugees had gathered in the church for the morning service. As the deep-toned cadences of the priestly voice rose and fell and echoed from pillar to pillar, and as the murmur of many responses whispered through the vaulted nave, there came a sound like the crack of doom, the roof split, slates and masonry fell in a cloud of smoke and dust, and a confused noise of human shouts and cries and the stampede of many feet filled the air.

FROM October 17 to October 21 we remained at Fauquissart. During this period our advance was brought to a standstill by the hardening resistance of the enemy, who had turned the tables by launching attack after attack against our exhausted infantry. In the northern area of the vast battlefield the situation was the same, the forward movement checked everywhere and the counter-pressure of the enemy increasing day by day.

NO HOPE OF RELIEF OR HELP

ON October 18 the 1st Corps de-trained at Hazebrouck, and the Field-Marshal took one of the most momentous decisions of the war in throwing these two divisions, his last reserve, on the left of the line, rather than use them in answering the desperate calls for assistance he hourly received. Onwards to the end of the month the extended troops held on without hope of relief or help of support.

One morning I met a group of officers in the fields just east of the village. They were in deep consultation, pointing here and there and from time to time kneeling down and gazing along the ground. Two sappers were pegging lengths of tape upon the ground, according to their directions.

Following on this, there marched on to the scene a battalion of the 19th Infantry Brigade, who started to dig vigorously along the white lines of the tape. Soon a system of short lengths of trench appeared, with here and there an emplacement designed for a machine-gun.

On October 23 our front line was withdrawn from its position on the Aubers ridge to these trenches, and in conformity with this movement the ammunition column had fallen back to the village of Vieille Chapelle. The reason of this movement was due partly to the now superior strength of the enemy, partly to the left flank of the 3rd Division being thrown too far forward and in consequence being dangerously exposed.

ON the afternoon of October 22 I happened to turn from a lane on to the straight road which connects Neuve Chapelle and Estaires. To my astonishment I saw a column of Indian infantry swinging through the flat, prosaic countryside as unconcernedly as if they were marching down the Grand Trunk Road in the swirling dust beneath the peepal trees and brazen sun. The column drew near and I recognized the Jullundur Brigade, whom I knew of old—Sikhs and Dogras, Pathans and Punjabi Mussulmans, with dark and bearded faces, expressionless beneath their *pagris*.

At the heads of companies rode the English officers, and in the rear came clattering pack mules and trains of followers, shivering and coughing in the raw cold. The regiments of this brigade billeted for the night in the houses about us, and I was asked to dine with one of them. It was strange to sit in a Belgian room and be waited on by Indian khitmutgars and see around you faces which you had last seen laughing and chatting about a silver shining table, beneath a beating punkah frill.

My friend, whose guest I was, was killed very shortly afterwards; he died one dark night on the parapet of a German trench, as he fired upon the enemy beneath him.



ON THE ROAD TO YPRES WHEN GREEN COVER STILL EXISTED

When the British Expeditionary Force took over the left wing of the Allied armies after the battle of the Aisne, British Tommies saw a great deal of the French cavalry. Here French Cuirassiers are passing a Scottish regiment of the 19th Brigade bivouacked in a wood in October 1914. The approach of the troops to the fighting line was made chiefly at night, and they rested in daylight and marched by dark to keep their movements as far as possible secret.

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THESE WERE THE BRITISH SOLDIERS WHO FIRST SAW YPRES

It was when the refugees streamed back through Zonnebeke, as related in Chapter 42 by Lieut.-Colonel Hamilton, that the battle of Ypres really began, but British troops had already entered the town, whose name is emblazoned on the Colours of almost every county regiment. On October 13 the 6th Cavalry Brigade



Photo, Antony of Ypres

marched into the Grand' Place, and watered and fed their horses, thus being the first British troops seen by the people of Ypres. Within a few months the fine old houses which the troops are passing were but shattered ruins and the last of the civilian population, here so full of hope, were pitiful refugees.



AT FIRST SHELTERS, THEN DEATH TRAPS *Sport & General*

The windmills that dotted the fertile plains of Flanders in the early days of the war were pathetic reminders of a peaceful past. Where once the harvest was ground the sails no longer moved. From eve ry one the miller and his men were gone and the mill served only the dire purposes of war. Some, like this one, were used as observation posts, some as field dressing stations, and in some a deadly nest of machine-guns was planted as described in both Chapters 42 and 43. Those in the actual area of fighting survived for a short time, for the artillery saw to it that such ready made material of war should be the object of direct hits.

DIARY of Five DREADFUL DAYS when We Lost ZONNEBEKE

by Lt.-Col. Hon. R. G. A. Hamilton, Master of Belhaven

LIEUT.-COLONEL HAMILTON, Master of Belhaven, was an officer of the Royal Artillery during the First Battle of Ypres. His intensely vivid diary was written from day to day in the field. We print an extract which describes the fierce fighting that led to the fall of Zonnebeke near Ypres, in October 1914, and a spy hunt in which Lt.-Col. Hamilton took part. The only son of the 10th Lord Belhaven and Stenton, he was killed in action on March 31, 1918, whilst in command of a Brigade of Field Artillery



DIARIST OF WAR

This gallant soldier, a part of whose diary forms this chapter, was generally known as the Master of Belhaven, "Master" being the courtesy title of the eldest son of a Scottish Viscount or Baron.

Swaine

ALL that night the population of the country streamed through the town (Zonnebeke) and by next morning (October 19) the streets were fairly clear. Our infantry, after falling back, took up the entrenched line which they had providentially prepared two days before.

At daylight the guns also took up positions immediately in the rear of the infantry brigade. From that moment the battle of Ypres began.

All that day we were bombarded by the Germans, but so far they confined their attentions to the trenches and did not drop shells in the town. Also, they had evidently not yet got up their heavy guns, as we were only under shrapnel fire. The German infantry did not make any attempt to assault.

I SPENT most of the morning with Bolster, who commanded the 106th Battery, in his dug-out immediately in the rear of the infantry trenches. He was killed two days later. We were on the crest of a small rise, and thirty or forty yards in front of us, on the forward slope, was the line of our infantry trenches, at that point held by the South Staffordshire Regiment. We had an excellent view of the country to our front, which much resembled Essex or Suffolk, being greatly enclosed and with many hedges and small woods.

Standing in the trench with nothing but my eyes showing, I watched, with Bolster, the enemy's infantry trickling over the skyline. They came into view at 3,400 yards, but as they were in very open order and came on in short rushes, they did not present much of a target for artillery; and, owing to the farms, woods and hedges, we could only see them here and there as they crossed open patches. This ridge they were crossing was under fire of our guns, and whenever we saw enough of them bunched together, we let off a few rounds at them. I shall never forget seeing some thirty or forty Germans running across a green field which was divided in two by a wire fence probably barbed, as I noticed that on reaching the wire fence they all concentrated and ran through a gate in it. Our lines of fire were already laid out, and from the map we were able to get the range to a yard.

ONE SHELL—FIFTEEN DIED

THE next time we saw a party crossing the fields and making for the gate Bolster ordered a round of gun-fire. At this short range (2,300 yards) with my Zeiss glasses I could almost see the faces of the Germans, it being a gloriously fine, sunny day.

Just before they reached the gate, he gave the order to fire. The guns, which were hidden behind us, loosed off and we heard the shells whining away. As the Germans clustered in the gate, a shell from No. 1 gun burst immediately in front of them. The whole lot at once lay down, and at first I thought that they were taking cover until our fire stopped. However, I watched them for some hours, and not one of them moved again. I counted fifteen in a circle of some twenty yards diameter.

BY now a good many of the German infantry had crossed the ridge, not only immediately in front of us, but all along the front. Owing to their being so close, and the fact that our guns were behind the crest of our hill, we were unable to reach them. We continued, however, to pour shrapnel on their supports as they crossed the skyline, doing considerable damage.

At one time I was leaning against the wall of a little house, some twenty yards from Bolster, who was in his hole, and I pointed out to him that the enemy were bunching behind a certain clump of bushes. My head was eight or nine feet higher than his, and he could not see them. He, therefore, asked me to range the battery for him, and so one of the ambitions of my life was realized in that I ranged a battery of guns in action. Measuring off the angle between the place at which we were then firing, and the place where I had seen the Germans bunching, with the graticules of my glasses, I gave the necessary switch of some five degrees, and ordered a round of battery fire. The ground sloped away from left to right.

THE range on the left was about right, but the right section were short. This was owing to the angle-of-sight being different for the two flanks of the battery. However, as I did not wish to upset the battery angle-of-sight, I increased the range in the right section by fifty yards, and then ordered a round of gun-fire. This was completely successful, two shells bursting in the clump of bushes in which I had seen the Germans collecting. I think that some twenty or thirty of them must have been in these bushes, and when the shells burst I saw only two or three run out. One ran away altogether; the other two, after staggering a few yards, collapsed. The remainder, I think, must have been knocked out at once.

Meanwhile, the German infantry, who were now too close and too much in the hollow below us for our guns to reach, were coming on, and we soon saw their scouts emerge from a pheasant cover not 200 yards in front of us. As the guns were only 200 yards behind us, this was getting uncomfortably close for artillery. However, we did not feel any anxiety, as our own infantry were well dug in between us

and them. As soon as these German scouts appeared our infantry opened fire on them at 200 yards, and the wretched Germans, who evidently did not know of the existence of this branch, began to fall thickly. They at once retired into their pheasant cover, and, being reinforced in considerable strength, opened fire on us.

Things were now very lively, and Bolster could neither leave his observation hole, nor could I leave the wall against which I had flattened myself. At the same time the German field artillery discovered the position of our trenches and the shrapnel began to arrive. Every time one put one's head out it was immediately saluted with half a dozen bullets, which made a noise like very loud and angry mosquitoes as they passed. I stopped at this place for some time, but in the lull of the firing I managed to run back to the gun-line.

IN the course of the afternoon General Lawford asked me to take a message to the colonel of the Staffordshires in his trench. With some difficulty I got there, crawling the last twenty yards, perfectly flat. I found that the Staffordshires headquarters had made themselves extremely comfortable in a very big bomb-proof, which one approached by going down several steps. The colonel told me that his pioneer sergeant was a coal-miner, and I at once recognized the pitman's work by the way in which the roof and the bomb-proof had been "propped." I had tea with them down there, and a cigarette, and was quite sorry to leave these comfortable and perfectly safe quarters for the perilous journey of returning to Zonnebeke.

. . . . . .

I had scarcely left the Staffordshires' bomb-proof when a shrapnel burst just behind me and on my right, the bullets striking the ground some ten yards to my right. Ten seconds later the second shell of the pair arrived, and burst ten or twenty yards away to my left. Had I been ten yards more to the right, or more to the left, one or other would have got me.

I had the same luck all the way back, many shrapnel bursting all round, but none touching me.

That night we again stayed in Zonnebeke, the guns being withdrawn at dusk.

All the next day (October 20) the Germans continued to shell our trenches. The loss among the infantry was very heavy, but the guns, being well concealed, and not having been located by the hostile aeroplanes, scarcely suffered at all. As usual, the batteries were withdrawn at nightfall, and went into billets round Frezenberg some two miles west of Zonnebeke. Our headquarters were in a dirty little inn on the cross-roads in Frezenberg. We occupied our old positions before dawn (October 21), and the battle continued. The Germans had, however, been very heavily reinforced and the attack was much heavier.

ABOUT midday the enemy began to bombard the town itself for some hours, but only with shrapnel. This did not do very much damage, but was very alarming, as the bullets from the shrapnel and pieces of the shells flew about the streets like hail. They were firing in bursts—that is to say, six shells arriving at a time. The air was thick with the flying lead, fragments of steel, slates from the roofs, glass and bricks. The noise was appalling: one could hardly hear oneself speak. One really wondered how anything could live in such an inferno, the more so as the main street of Zonnebeke was a prolongation of the German line of fire, and rifle bullets were continuously whining down the street.

. . . . . .

About 3 o'clock in the afternoon the "Black Marias" (high-explosive shells) started. Zonnebeke has a church standing in a small *Place*, with a very high steeple, and evidently the German gunners, knowing that our headquarters were in the centre of the town, were using the church steeple as a target. This bombardment in the streets of a town by high-explosive shells was, I think, the most alarming part of the

THE THUNDER OF THE GUNS BEGINS AROUND 'PLUG STREET'

A battery of 18-pounder guns of the 1st Cavalry Brigade has come into action to the east of Ploegsteert on October 19, during the 1st battle of Ypres. With the team at full gallop, the gun swaying and bouncing over the rough ground, the gunners clinging desperately to the limbers, it has reached this meagre cover. At this time the shell shortage made it impossible for British gunners to return the German fire shell for shell, and here in an exposed position the enemy may get the range and shatter the whole battery.

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whole experience. Everything in the town shook when one of those shells burst. The whole ground appeared to tremble as if in an earthquake, even when the explosion was 100 yards away.

About 5 o'clock news came down that Major Malony, who commanded the 104th Battery, in action near the level crossing, had been seriously wounded. He was observing from the infantry trenches some 800 yards in front of his guns and at the foot of the windmill by Zonnebeke Station. The medical officer at once went off to try to find a motor ambulance, and I rode up to the station.

THE fire was so hot in the street that I decided to leave Bucephalus under a large porch, and I continued my way to the windmill on foot, keeping close into the walls of the houses on the side from which the shells were coming. So long as the houses in the street were continuous they afforded me complete protection from shrapnel or rifle bullets, and I was hit only by bricks and mortar from the walls of the houses ; but as I neared the outskirts of the town the houses became detached one from another, and then it was very unpleasant having to cross the spaces between them. The shrapnel was bursting at intervals of ten or fifteen seconds, and it was impossible to judge when they would come. However, I found that by waiting until a shell had just burst, I usually had time to run like a hare to the next house. The rifle bullets, of course, could not be legislated for at all.

ONE IN TWELVE ALIVE

I EVENTUALLY reached the windmill close to Malony's observation post. Here I found a young officer of, I think, the Queen's, who was sheltering under the mound of the windmill with some twenty men. He told me that he and his men were all that were left of a company of 250. He also told me that Malony had been dragged out of his trench and was lying behind a cottage on the other side of the road. On reaching this, I found that he had already been moved back towards his battery. I could see him being carried on a stretcher. He was now under cover from rifle-fire and it was much better to let them continue across the 800 yards intervening between where he was hit and the battery, than to take him all the way round through the streets of the town, which were being heavily shelled.

I therefore started back down the street towards where I had left my horse, and was met by the motor ambulance which the doctor had sent up. I stopped it, made the man turn round and got in beside him, telling him to drop me when we passed my horse. The motor was a Daimler with the well-known scuttle-dash. I sat on the floor and stuck my head well under cover of the dash. I thought that if I was going to be hit I might as well avoid getting it in the head.

In spite of the shells bursting in front and behind us the ambulance was not hit, and the driver certainly exceeded the speed limit.

I found Bucephalus happily munching some hay, and remounted him. I sent the ambulance on to the level-crossing.

By this time the Germans had got the range of the church very accurately, and the open place which I had to cross was thick with white smoke from bursting shrapnel. I never expected to cross it alive. The street was paved with round cobbles and covered with slimy mud—a place, under ordinary circumstances, I should have hesitated along at a walk. However, on this occasion we negotiated it, including a right-angle corner, at as fast a gallop as poor old Bucephalus was capable of, and regained the cover of the narrow streets untouched.

I FOUND the ambulance at the level-crossing, and took it up to the farm, where we were joined by the medical officer. Malony had just arrived at the farm and was lying on some straw in the kitchen, with several other wounded men. At first I thought he was dead, the bullet having struck him on the side of the head and apparently had passed through the brain. He had been looking through his director when hit. He was breathing very heavily and the doctor thought he was in a very bad way. I was, however, able to tell him that only an hour or two before, Malony had told me that he had a bad attack of asthma, and this probably accounted for the breathing.

We got him into the motor ambulance and sent him off to Ypres. The doctor and I trotted along the road leading from the farm to the main road, immediately behind the ambulance.

It was now just dark. The wagon-line of Malony's battery was in a field beside us. The battery had not been shelled all day, but suddenly a single shrapnel burst twenty feet above our heads in the darkness. It must have been a chance shot. The ambulance put on speed and the doctor and I galloped after it. At the time we had no idea that the shell had done any damage. However, the next morning, we heard that it had flattened out two complete teams. Our infantry were all this time



RISEN FROM ITS ASHES

As early as October 1914 Zonnebeke was subjected to the furious bombardment so graphically described in this chapter. It was only the beginning of the storm, and the cruel rain of steel poured on to the luckless town till not one stone was left upon another. But Zonnebeke has risen from the ruins, and here is the church that has today replaced that wrecked in the holocaust of the Salient.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



BATTLEFIELD HALLOWED FOR ALL TIME BY BRITISH HEROISM

This peaceful stretch of country is the Ypres salient as it is today, all ravages of war removed, but still the home of memories as glorious and tragic as any that cluster round the war fields of France and Flanders. This photograph, showing the generally flat character of the land, was taken from the tower of the church at Zonnebeke (seen in the previous page) looking west with Ypres on the skyline. A sketch map of the whole area appears in page 206.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

being subjected to appalling fire both by shrapnel and "Black Marias," the trenches in many parts being completely blown in, and the men in them buried alive. They dug out as many as they could, but when the cover was gone the survivors were exposed to view, and as nothing can live under fire unless entrenched, I fear that many of the men were buried alive.

By nightfall it was obvious to General Lawford that our position was becoming untenable, and it was decided to withdraw as soon as it was dark.

By this time we had no supports, the supports and reserves having long ago been sent up into the trenches. Even the General's own headquarter guard had gone up, too. The only men available were some belonging to a company of the R.E. These hastily threw up a little shelter trench at the level crossing, and if the worst came to the worst we hoped to be able to hold the crossing until the remains of the infantry got through.

Unfortunately, we had no position prepared in rear, and it seemed quite likely that we should have no chance of digging in at a fresh place. The same thing had been happening on our right, and the other brigades were compelled to withdraw also. The remains of the brigades evacuated their trenches and retired in the course of the night in good order and without confusion, though most of the baggage was lost. At dawn the next morning (October 22) we took up a position extending roughly from the level-crossing west of Zonnebeke to the V of Veldhoek. This line, unfortunately, passed through a thick wood, and it was in this wood that on succeeding days our losses were most heavy.

The previous afternoon we had been much bothered by spies, who adopted every possible sort of trick to communicate with the enemy. At one time it was noticed that the arms of a certain windmill were turning in a most erratic manner. The windmill was deserted, the sails furled, and there was apparently no one in it. It was, therefore, quite clear that someone was playing with it; and by the time we reached the windmill the spies had got away. We blew it up next day.

MOST DANGEROUS SPY HUNT

We also suspected that the Germans had adopted their usual trick, when evacuating a town, of leaving men behind, concealed usually in the cellars of the houses, with a telephone.

General Lawford instructed me to go with the provost-sergeant and search the houses for spies. This was as unpleasant a task as one could well hope to perform.

By now the eastern part of the town, where I was searching, was being subjected to a heavy and continuous shrapnel fire. The street was also enfiladed by rifle fire. All the doors had been locked by their owners before leaving the town, and I think that this part of Belgium must make a peculiarly strong form of locks and bolts. I never would have believed it would have been so difficult to break in doors. However, at last we found a forge, and in it a large bar of iron, so heavy that it was as much as two men could do to carry it. Our task now became quite easy. The sergeant and I would take up our positions, revolver in hand, on each side of the door, while two men charged across the street with the heavy bar of iron. One blow was almost invariably enough. The bar and its carriers would collapse on the pavement, while the sergeant and I rushed in.

We searched dozens of houses in this manner, but found them all empty. However, we came to one house where, on rushing in, we were met by a man in plain clothes with a rifle, who immediately fired and shot the provost-sergeant practically through the heart. He did not live many minutes, but our assailant did not survive to see the result of his treachery.

By now the roofs of the houses were coming in, and I withdrew my search-party to brigade headquarters and reported to General Lawford that I did not consider it possible to continue a house-to-house search until the fire moderated. He approved of my action and ordered the search to be discontinued.

The enemy captured Zonnebeke immediately after we left, but fortunately did not press their attack.

THE LONG, LONG BATTLE FOR YPRES BEGINS

SCOTS in the SALIENT

It was in such seemingly peaceful surroundings as this that the opening stages of that terrific clash of arms, the First Battle of Ypres, described in this chapter, took place. Right, men of the 2nd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders are passing through the village of Vlamertinghe three miles east of Ypres, to man the Le Maisnil section and meet the full fury of the German artillery fire.

Below is a scene in a farmyard. The upper door of the barn, through which straw was hoisted only a few days earlier, is open; a Scottish soldier looks out from this inconspicuous observation post across the peaceful farmyard for signs of enemy activity.

Imperial War Museum





WHEN THE GLORY OF ARRAS WAS LAID LOW

Few towns in France suffered more terribly from the ravages of war than Arras. Its proudest possession was the Hôtel de Ville, standing in the Petit' Place, a glorious example of 16th century French architecture with a graceful belfry. The photograph, left, shows the Hôtel de Ville as it was in November 1914, and that below, left, gives another view after the second bombardment. Only a spiral iron staircase marks the site where houses once stood. Below is the rebuilt belfry as it is today, a replica of its former beauty.

Photos. E.N.A.







CABARET OF DEATH!

Shelled by Friend and Foe

by Captain E. J. Needham

IN one of the most vivid narratives ever written of early fighting in the Ypres salient, Captain Needham, of the Northamptonshire Regt., here tells of a day and night of bloody battle in the neighbourhood of the Kortekeek cabaret and of Langemarck and Poelcappelle. These villages, later known as mangled and unrecognizable ruins, in October 1914 still retained their red roofs and church steeples

OCTOBER 22, 1914. I found the battalion lining a railway embankment about a quarter of a mile away out of the village of Langemarck. I asked what had happened, and was told that the Germans had attacked the 1st Brigade, who were holding the line in front of the road running between Langemarck and Steenstraat, and the line to their left, which was held by dismounted French cavalry. These latter, having no entrenching tools of any description, had been unable to "dig themselves in" and were soon driven out of their line. The Huns had occupied this and had enfiladed the left of the 1st Brigade line, held by the Cameron Highlanders, who, in their turn, were driven out of their trenches. Heavy fighting in this neighbourhood was still going on.

We stayed on the railway bank for about an hour and then got orders to return to Pilckem, but to hold ourselves in readiness to move at very short notice. We marched back, and just as we arrived at the village the head of the battalion halted. We could see the brigade commander, General Bulfin, and his brigade-major in conversation with the colonel. Presently the colonel rode back to us and told us we had to return immediately and take back the trenches lost by the Camerons. "C" Company was to lead the way, and I was told, not at all to my satisfaction, that I was to go ahead with the "point" of the advance guard, taking every possible precaution, as nobody knew just where the line was, just where the Camerons were, or the enemy.

IT was now pitch dark; in fact, one of the darkest nights I have ever known in my life. It was impossible to see more than a yard in front. I think that for the next half hour or so I was more thoroughly frightened than at any other time during the war. Moving up a lane in the inky darkness, not knowing where one was going to, but only that somewhere ahead were the enemy, waiting for us. We moved along the ditches on each side of the road so as not to give away our advance by the sound of our feet tramping along the hard surface of the lane. After going about two kilometres, suddenly from the left-hand side of the road came a loud "Halte! Qui va là?" As soon as I had recovered from the shock of this sudden challenge in the dark I called back, "Amis, anglais." "Passez vous, mes amis," called back the French sentry, who I could just make out was standing outside a small cottage. On we went, thankful to have been challenged instead of shot at first and challenged afterwards!

THE GERMANS WERE VERY NEAR

AFTER another two kilometres or so we heard footsteps coming down the road. I promptly halted my men and passed the word back to halt the rest of the advance guard and main body, and waited till the footsteps sounded quite close. Then I called out, "Halt! Who goes there?" A voice answered, "Medical officer, Cameron Highlanders, with Captain Cameron, badly wounded. Who are you?" I told him, and asked where the Camerons were and also the Germans. He told me that about a kilometre farther on was a cross-road, and that if we turned to the left there we should find the remnants of the Camerons about eight hundred yards up that road, and that the Germans were about four hundred yards beyond them again. I thanked him and on we went again.

Presently we heard the rumble and rattle of horse transport to our right, and shortly afterwards we reached the cross-roads; and there, just arrived at them, was a whole lot of horse transport. I asked them who they were, and they replied they were the 1st Brigade First Line Transport. I asked if they were aware that the Germans were only about a thousand yards away, and they said they had not the slightest idea of it. I told them they had better stay where they were and keep as quiet as possible until our colonel came up, and then ask him for orders. They were very lucky to arrive there just when they did and when we did, for otherwise they would have ridden right into the Germans, or, at any rate, to within a few hundred yards of them, and they must have been heard and fired upon with disastrous results, as the lane was much too narrow for them to have turned round and retired.

WE marched on once more, still keeping to the ditches at the side of the road, and some minutes later we were suddenly challenged again—in a very Scotch accent. This proved to be the sentry over the Camerons' headquarters—a farmhouse, in and around which were the remains of that battalion. I told him who we were and asked for an officer. One soon appeared, and told me that we must keep very quiet, as the enemy were quite close by, along a road running at right angles to the one we were on, about three or four hundred yards ahead. This officer went down the road to speak to Colonel Osborne Smith and to tell him the situation. In the meantime, we stayed where we were.

Very shortly afterwards we heard loud shouting, cheering and singing in front of us, which we gathered was the merry Hun disporting himself after his victory of the afternoon! After waiting about half an hour, Bentley [a company commander] came up to me and said



COMMANDING THE 2nd BRIGADE

General Bulfin commanded the 2nd Brigade during the incidents described in this chapter, and later the 28th and 60th Divs. and 21st Corps. He was wounded on November 1, 1914, after being promoted Major-General for distinguished service in the field in the previous month.

Elliott & Fry



YPRES AND THE EVER-FAMOUS SALIENT AS IT WAS IN 1914

This sketch map shows the country round Ypres as it was when the first battle of Ypres was fought between October 20 and November 22, 1914. It is impossible to indicate the exact position occupied by the British Army, for the line was still fluid and varied from day to day as the enemy made a succession of thrusts in a desperate effort to break through. The position did not become stabilized until after the second battle of Ypres in April and May 1915.

that " C " Company were to extend across the field to the right of the road, advance towards the enemy and drive them out of their position, with " D " Company on our right. Shortly afterwards the rest of the company came filing up the ditch and then out to the right across the fields. They were followed by " D " Company, who carried out the same manoeuvre. Presently the word was passed down from the right for both companies to advance, and off we went, stumbling over turnips, trying to keep touch with the man on our right and left, and utterly unable to see anything.

Suddenly heavy firing broke out on our right and we heard cries of alarm, accompanied apparently by much guttural cursing, to our front. A few bullets started to come our way, so we lay down and fired five rounds rapid into the darkness to our immediate front and then charged, yelling at the tops of our voices. We arrived at the road to find the enemy gone, and promptly started to " dig ourselves in " as hard as we could. After a while, Bentley came along, and sent me back to try to find one platoon which had got lost in the dark. I wandered off, edging away to my right, and presently came to the lane we had left, in the ditch of which I found about half a company of Coldstream Guards.

. . . . . .

During all this time, heavy fighting was going on on our right, where " D " Company were attacking a mill, in which were some German machine-gunners. Just about the time Russell (a fellow subaltern) and I reached our line, the mill was captured and our machine guns were installed in place of the Germans'. Things now quieted down, and we were able to dig in peace. I spent the whole night walking up and down our line, very cold and very hungry. We had all gone supperless as we had moved out of Pilckem too early, and it was quite impossible for the cookers to come up anywhere near us, and even if they had it would have been impossible for carrying parties to find our line in the intense darkness.

Just before dawn we were able to make out a small cottage immediately in front of " C " Company's line. We sent out a patrol under a sergeant to find out if it was occupied, and they presently returned to say they had found the dead body of a man, stark naked, but from his identity disk round his neck, a private in the Cameron Highlanders. The Huns had evidently made off with his kit and accoutrements, and no doubt some Hun had a wonderful souvenir to send home in the shape of the unfortunate man's kilt !

We " stood to " for about a quarter of an hour and then " C " Company was ordered to occupy some trenches to our right front, about one hundred and fifty yards in front of the road, which the Camerons had been driven out of the evening before. Just before we " stood to," a terrific outbreak of firing on our left broke out. I must explain that at the junction of the lane by which we had come up from Pilckem, and the Langemarck-Bixschoote road

on which we now were, stood an inn called the " Kortekeek Kabaret," and this was strongly held by the enemy.

On the side of the road on which we had spent the night, and about four hundred yards east of the inn, stood the mill which " D " Company had attacked and captured during the night. This outbreak of firing heralded a strong attack by " A " Company, in conjunction with some of the Camerons, on the inn, which was successful in so far as they got right up to the inn, but the opposition was too strong for them, the Germans having a large number of men and many machine-guns in it, so that our troops had to retire with heavy losses.

SHORTLY after " C " Company had moved without loss or trouble to its new position, the terrible news came along to us that poor old Russell had been killed in this attack. . . . I was frightfully cut up about this, Russell having been one of my best friends in the old days at the Depot. . . . He was one of the nicest fellows I have ever known.

We all got busy trying to improve our new so-called trenches, which were really nothing more than a narrow ditch about two feet wide and a yard deep. We were now immediately in front of the mill, and very shortly after we took up our position, to our horror our guns started to shell it! We sent back messages to battalion headquarters to ask them to let the gunners know that we were in front of the mill, but the shelling continued; and presently the Germans started to shell it, too.

CURSING OUR OWN GUNNERS

SO now we were in a lovely predicament: we were collecting all the German " shorts " and our own gunners' " overs," and could not do anything but lie at the bottom of the ditch shivering and cursing with fear and rage, and sending back messages at intervals to try to get our gunners to give their attention elsewhere, where it was more needed. This double shelling continued off and on the whole day and we had several casualties from it.

About 9 or 10 o'clock the Queen's came up and, advancing through the Camerons and the remains of " A " Company, attacked the inn, with the 60th and Loyal North Lancashires attacking on their left. This time the attack was successful, the inn being captured together with about three hundred Germans, many more of them being killed. After this the morning dragged on, fine but coldish.

The mill continued to be bombarded by both sides, and heavy firing was going on on our right all the time, where the 1st Brigade were heavily engaged. In front of " C " Company the ground, a field of roots, sloped away down to the little stream of the Hannebeek, the banks of which were clearly defined by pollarded willows. Behind this stream again, the ground sloped upwards gradually to a small wood stretching along a low ridge.

THE stream was about three hundred and fifty yards in front of us, and the wood another four hundred yards behind that again. To our right front and about a mile away stood the church and red-roofed houses of Langemarck, and beyond that again and about the same distance away from it, the church and roofs of Poelcappelle. No food had come up to us during the morning, not even our usual tea and rum, and we had to fall back on our " iron rations " of bully beef and biscuits. About 1 p.m.



WAITING FOR AN EASY MARK

It was in country such as this that the incidents described in this chapter took place. Here, beside a country road along which a few days before farm carts had slowly trundled, a surprise is in store for any wearer of field grey who shows himself. British troops have found a ready-made trench in a ditch, and the flat field, characteristic of the Flanders landscape, from which the crops will now never be gathered, affords a sharp horizon against the sky for any oncoming troops to cross.

we could see large bodies of Germans collecting in the wood on the ridge opposite, and " Jumbo " Bentley and I knelt up in our ditch so as to be able to see better what they were up to, and both scanned the wood closely through our field-glasses.

Suddenly I felt a terrific blow on my right arm, just as if somebody had hit me on the funnybone as hard as he could with a sledge-hammer. It spun me round like a top and I collapsed in the bottom of the trench. The man next to me rolled over and said, " You ain't 'alf bloody well got 'it in the 'and, sir ! " and on looking down I saw that my right hand was a mass of blood.

My arm still felt numb from the blow, and I could hardly realize that it was my hand that was hit, as it did not hurt at all. However, this man cut my field dressing out of my tunic, and after dousing my hand with iodine, which *did* hurt, he bound it up very well; he then made a sling out of my woollen scarf which I was wearing, insisted on giving me one of his own cigarettes and lighting it for me, and told me not to worry, I was " for ' Blighty ' all right with that packet ! " This sounded too good to be true, and I felt distinctly better.

He also said, and I then realized it for the first time, that I had been very lucky not to be killed, as I had my field-glasses up to my eyes and the bullet which had hit my right hand would have got me in the head if it had been one inch farther to the left ! He told me my right collar badge was badly dented and the bullet must have hit this after hitting my hand. About five minutes after I was hit, a man two away from me on the left was kneeling up looking out towards the Germans when he was shot straight through the head. We came to the conclusion that there must be snipers lying in one of the pollarded willows by the stream, about three hundred and fifty yards in front of us, and that they must be pretty hot shots. Anyhow, Bentley gave orders that no man was to expose himself from now onwards unless we were attacked.

All this time shells from both sides kept dropping on and around the unfortunate mill, which was now on fire in several places. I suppose it was the after-effects of the shock of being hit, but anyhow my nerve went completely. I lay in the bottom of the trench expecting the Huns to come over and wipe me out lying defenceless there. Or I began to panic that instead of going home with a nice wound, a shell would land in the trench and blow me up.

I SWEATED WITH FUNK

I lay and sweated with funk, and the farther the afternoon drew on, the worse my nerves got. It was impossible with that d——d sniper in front to get out of the ditch and walk away over the open to find the dressing-station; the only thing to do was to lie where I was until night-fall, and then to make a bolt for it, and pray that the Hun did not attack us before that.

About four o'clock we could hear much singing and cheering from the enemy's direction, and this continued for the next two hours. This did not cheer me up, as we all decided that it was the Hun cheering himself up before making an attack upon us. At last it started to get dark, and, at six o'clock, I said good-bye to Bentley, wished him all the best of luck in the world, and, scrambling out of the ditch, ran across to the road behind us, where I found Cartwright and " D " Company in the ditch. I stopped for a minute to tell him what had happened to me, then said good-bye and bolted round the back of the mill on a short cut for where Cartwright told me battalion headquarters was on the lane running to Pilckem.

The man who had bound up my hand insisted on coming back with me and carrying my pack and equipment. As we passed the mill the whole of the top of it fell in, and a huge column of smoke and flame shot up to the skies, illuminating the ground all around over a very big area and, of course, silhouetting us both clearly. Never before or since in my life have I run so fast ! It seemed miles to the road, but at last we arrived there blowing and wheezing, and hurled ourselves into the ditch.

I found the colonel and Guy Robinson, reported myself wounded, and was most kindly spoken to by the colonel, who wished me the best of luck and was kind enough to say he should miss me very much. They were both most kind and considerate and told me I should find the dressing-station in the cottage along the lane where the French sentry had challenged us the night before. While we were talking a terrific outburst of gun and rifle fire from the Germans broke out all along the line, and was at once answered by our men. Shells started to burst all round, and spent

EASY GOING BY DAY BUT A DEATH TRAP BY NIGHT

This photograph gives some idea of the difficulties that faced the troops fighting in Flanders. Here infantry are advancing in broad daylight across a field in single file. It was, however, a very different matter on a dark night under enemy fire to go forward stumbling over turnip roots as did " C " Company of the Northamptonshire Regt. in Captain Needham's thrilling narrative, with German machine-guns posted in a mill such as is seen in the photograph.

Imperial War Museum





FIRST SHADOWS OF WAR FALL ON YPRES

Here, before the ancient Cloth Hall of Ypres, soon to be a battered mass of ruins, stands a strange reminder of the vicissitudes of war. A London furniture van has been pressed into the service of the Army and now has a khaki-clad driver. There is something strangely ironic in the words painted on its side, for it stands in a land where household goods and priceless relics of the past were ruthlessly destroyed and the removals were the pathetic efforts of refugees to save the remnants of their homes.

bullets to " ping " their way past. The colonel told me I had better be off as quickly as I could go, as the Germans were evidently going to attack, so I said good-bye to them both and, accompanied by my faithful volunteer batman, fairly legged it down the lane.

ON and on we ran, expecting every minute to be our last, as shells were bursting all round, but at last we got to the crossroads, where we had stopped the 1st Brigade Transport the night before, and turning to the right found ourselves out of the zone of fire. We arrived at the cottage and I went in, saw an open door on the left of the entrance passage, and an M.O. attending to a wounded man in the room.

I told him who I was, my regiment, and that I was wounded, and asked him if Captain Lochrin, our M.O., was about. " Oh, yes," he said, " you will find him in the room opposite." I thanked him, crossed the passage and opened the door opposite. On going inside I found, to my horror, poor Lochrin stretched out on his back on the floor, dead !

To this day I cannot imagine why the M.O., who must have known that he was dead, ever let me, wounded as I was, walk in on all that was left of poor Lochrin like that. It gave me an awful shock, and I fairly bolted out of the place and down the lane. We passed some Tommies at the entrance to the village and asked them if there was another dressing-station there, and they told us there was another in the village school.

We found this. Inside the schoolroom the floor was strewn with straw, and in the middle of it were two deal tables on trestles. On these were laid various badly wounded men being attended to by the doctors, who were working in their shirt-sleeves. All round the tables on the straw-covered floor lay wounded men. The room was stacked with them. An orderly found me a corner somewhere, and I lay down, feeling completely exhausted after all the panic, shocks, and excitements of the afternoon.

I LAY there from about 7.15 p.m. till 10.30 p.m. The whole time wounded men were being taken out and fresh wounded were coming in, and operations, including amputations of legs and arms, were being performed on the trestle tables. How different from the cleanliness and orderly organization and discipline of the operating theatre in a hospital was the scene in that schoolroom !

On the walls, maps and pictures of animals and birds ; easels and blackboards along the walls ; at the tables stood R.A.M.C. orderlies holding candles stuck into wine bottles to light the shirt-sleeved surgeons at their task. They worked quickly, noiselessly and efficiently, without fuss or bother about the awful conditions for such work ; they were so kind and gentle to the unfortunate men on whom they worked, most of whom were in terrible agony.







HOW MESSINES SHARED THE MARTYRDOM OF YPRES



THE opening stage of that terrific struggle, the battle of Ypres, was fought in a peaceful countryside which the Master of Belhaven describes in Chapter 42 as "much like Essex or Suffolk." Among its villages was Messines, around whose name so many memories of almost incredible heroism and poignant tragedy cluster. The interior of the venerable 11th century church is seen (top, left) only a few days after the incidents related in that chapter. It had been set on fire by the Germans on October 27, 1914, and completely gutted, but a wooden crucifix remained untouched by the flames. Below, left, is the exterior of the church at the same date. Already heavily scarred, it was finally razed to the ground beyond hope of restoration. Above is the new village church today, with a captured German gun in front of it, grim reminder of past tragedy.

Photos, F. Coleman, and A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

The DAY the WAR was NEARLY LOST

I Helped to Smash the Prussians

by Pte. H. J. Polley

OCTOBER 31, 1914, has been called the most critical day of the whole war. Then it was that the Germans came within an ace of breaking the thin British line and smashing their way through to the Channel ports, the capture of which would have added immeasurably to the difficulties of the Allies. Pte. Polley, of the 2nd Battn. Bedfordshire Regiment, tells of his experience at that time in simple, vivid phrases, first in the excitement of advance and after in the grim hours of defence

ALL the world knows now how furiously the Germans tried to hack their way through to Calais, so that they could have their fling at the hated English. It is known, too, that they were held and hurled back.

I am going to tell you something of the way in which this was done, for I belonged to the Bedfordshire Regiment, the old 16th Foot, and the Bedfords were part of the Glorious Seventh Division, and did their share in keeping back the German forces, which included the Prussian Guards, who at this time were being rushed up to this sector because it was thought that no troops could stand against them.

These idols of the German nation were picked men and brave fellows, and at that time had an absolute belief in their own invincibility; but events proved that they were no match for the British Guards and the rest of the British troops who fought them at Ypres.

For later these Prussian Guards from Berlin were literally mown down by our artillery, machine-gun and rifle fire, and were left lying dead in solid masses—walls of corpses.

The Kaiser had planned to enter Ypres as a conqueror, at the head of his Guards; but he hurried off a beaten man, leaving his slaughtered Guards in heaps.

ORIGINALLY in the 1st Battalion of the Bedfords, I later went into the 2nd, and I was serving with the 2nd in South Africa when the European War broke out. It is an interesting fact that nearly all the battalions which formed the Seventh Division came from foreign service—India, Egypt, Africa and elsewhere—which meant that many of the men of the Seventh had seen active service and were veteran fighters. They had not learned their warfare at peace manoeuvres in Germany.

Our division consisted of the 1st Grenadier Guards, the 2nd Scots Guards, the 2nd Border, 2nd Gordon Highlanders, 2nd Bedfordshire, 2nd Yorkshire, 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers, 2nd Wiltshire, 2nd Royal West Surrey, 2nd Royal Warwickshire, 1st Royal Welch Fusiliers, 1st South Staffordshire, and the Northumberland Hussars; and we had a pom-pom detachment and horse, field, and garrison artillery.

We were under Major-General Sir T. Capper, D.S.O.

We had been sent to help the Naval Division at Antwerp, and early in October we landed at Zeebrugge—the only division to land at that port [*see* illustration page 212]. But we were not there long, for we soon learned that we were too late, and that Antwerp had fallen.

WE were sorry, but there was no time for moping, and we were quickly on the move to the quaint old city of Bruges, where we were billeted for a night. Sir Harry Rawlinson had moved his headquarters from Bruges to Ostend, so next day we marched towards Ostend and took up outpost. Then we had a forced march back to Bruges, and from Bruges we started marching, but we did not know where we were going till we got to the city of Ypres.

So far we had not had any fighting. We had been marching and marching, first to one place, then to another, constantly expecting to come into action, and very nearly doing so, for the Germans were swarming all over the countryside. We had to be content with being on outpost and guarding bridges, and so on—hard and necessary work, we knew; but we wanted something more thrilling, something bigger—and we eventually got it. There was practically only the Seventh Division available for anything that turned up. The Northumberland Hussars were able to give a very good account of themselves, and were, I believe, the first Yeomanry corps to go into action. The few Uhlans I saw while I was at the Front had been taken prisoners by these Hussars, who brought them in, lances and all. But there is very little to say about cavalry work; it was mostly a matter for the infantry, and, of course, the artillery.

While we were around Ypres, waiting for the Germans to come and break through, we heard a good deal, indirectly, of what was going to happen to us and to England.

The Germans had all sorts of monster guns, and with these they were going to bombard England across the narrow Channel when they got to the French coast, and they were going to work all sorts of miracles with their airships and aeroplanes.

We soon heard, too, that the Kaiser himself was in the field; but the only effect of that information was to make us more keen to show what we could do. Truth to tell, we were far from being impressed by the presence of either the Kaiser or his vaunted Guards. We were in the best of spirits, and had a sublime belief in Sir John French and all his staff and our own officers.

It was on October 31—which has been called *the* decisive day of the fight

'ALL HIGHEST'

The news that the Kaiser was in the field had no effect on British Tommies but to make them more determined to show him that his army was not invincible, as Pte. Polley states in this chapter. Here is the War Lord talking to one of his generals at the time when the German troops were mown down by the 7th Division.

Photopress



for Ypres, and which was certainly a most terrible day in every way—that the Seventh Division was ordered to attack the German position.

The weather was very fine, clear and sunny, and our spirits were in keeping with it. We were thankful to be on the move because we had had nearly three weeks in the trenches, and had been billeted in all sorts of queer places—above and below ground—under an everlasting shell fire, which became unendurable and was thoroughly nerve-destroying.

We knew what a desperate business the advance would be, because the Germans greatly outnumbered us, and they had planted vast numbers of guns. They had immense bodies of men in trenches, and in a large number of the houses and buildings which commanded the ground over which we had to advance they had placed machine-guns, with their villainous muzzles directed on us from bedroom windows and holes which had been knocked in walls.

A MOST TERRIBLE BUSINESS

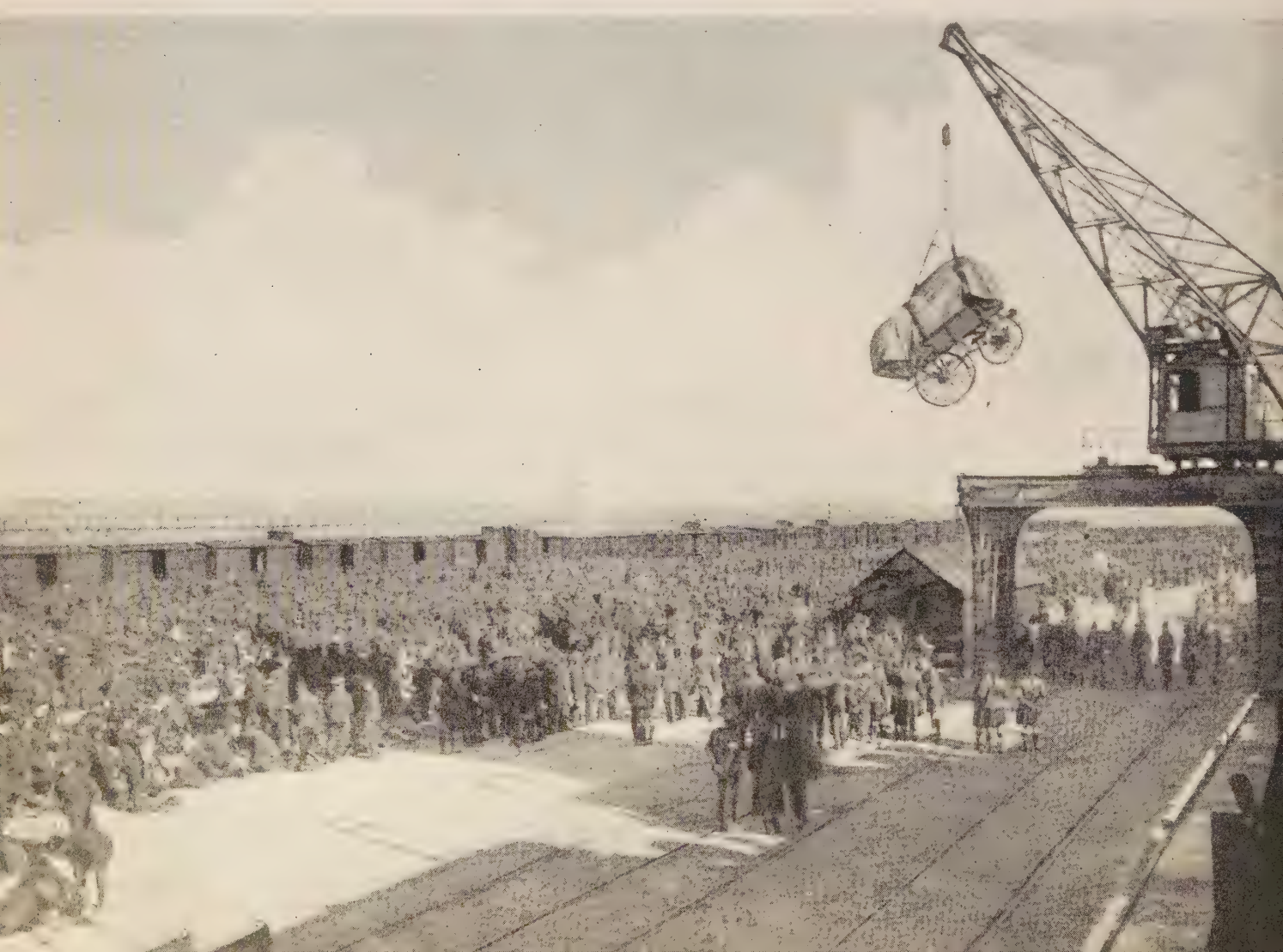
From start to finish the advance was a terrible business—far more terrible than any words of mine can make you realize. The whole division was on the move, stretching along a big tract of country; but of course no man could see much of what was happening, except in his own immediate locality. Neither had he much chance of thinking about anything or anybody except himself, and then only in a numbed sort of way, because of the appalling din of the artillery on both sides, the crash of the guns and the explosions of the shells, with the ceaseless rattle of the rifles and the machine-guns.

At the beginning the regiments kept fairly well together, but very soon we were all mixed up, and you could not tell what regiment a man belonged to, unless he wore a kilt; then you knew that, at any rate, he wasn't a Bedford.

Some of us had our packs and full equipment. Others were without packs, having been compelled to throw them away. But there was not a man who had let his rifle go: that is the last thing of all to be parted from; it is the soldier's very life. And every man had a big supply of ammunition, with plenty in reserve.

The General himself took part in the advance, and what he did was done by every other officer present. There was no difference between officer and man, and a thing to be specially noted is the fact that the officers got hold of rifles and blazed away as hard as any man.

Never, during the whole of the war, had there been a more awful fire than that which we gave the Germans. Whenever we got the chance, we gave them what they call the "Englishman's mad minute"—that is, the dread-



LAST MEN IN KHAKI TO LAND AT ZEEBRUGGE

The 7th Division that smashed the Prussians near Gheluvelt, as related by Private Polley in this chapter, were the last British troops to land at Zeebrugge before it fell into German hands. Below are some of the men on the quay on October 7, 1914, just after landing. All ranks are already ashore, a train of any rolling stock that could be got together is waiting to take them to the railhead, and the transport wagons are being slung ashore.

Photo C. Pilkington



ON THE MARCH TO SAVE THE BRITISH LINE

The market place of the little Belgian town of Thielt saw strange scenes on October 12, 1914. Here in apparently inextricable confusion is the 7th Division which had landed at Zeebrugge five days earlier, halted on its way to Ypres, where it performed the heroic deeds described in this chapter. Actually there is no confusion, for when the order comes to go forward, each man, each horse, each wagon will take its appointed place in the cavalcade. In the centre of the square is the transport of the 2nd Bn. Scots Guards.

Photo, C. Pilkington

ful fifteen rounds a minute rapid fire. We drove it into them and mowed them down. Many a soldier, when his own rifle was too hot to hold, threw it down and snatched the rifle of a dead or wounded comrade who had no further use for it, and with this fresh, cool weapon he continued the deadly work by which success could alone be won.

I DO not know what the German losses were, but I do know that I saw bodies lying around in solid masses, while we passed our own dead and wounded everywhere as we advanced. Where they fell they had to stay; it was impossible to do anything for them while the fighting continued.

The whole of the advance consisted of a series of what might be called ups and downs—a little rush, then a "bob down." At most, no one rush carried us more than fifty yards; then we dropped out of sight as best we could, to get a breather and prepare for another dash. It was pretty open country hereabouts, so that we were fully exposed to the German artillery and rifle fire, in addition to the hail from the machine-guns in the neighbouring buildings. Here and there we found little woods and clumps of trees and bits of rising ground and ditches and hedges—and you may take it from me that shelter of any sort was very welcome and freely used.

A remarkable feature of this striving to hide from the enemy's fire was that it was almost impossible to escape from the shells and bullets for any appreciable time, for the simple reason that the Germans altered their range in the most wonderful manner. So surely as we got the shelter of a little wood or ditch, they seemed to have the distance almost instantly, and the range was so accurate that many a copse and ditch became a little graveyard in the course of that advance.

At one point as we went along I noticed a small ditch against a hedge. It was a dirty, uninviting ditch, deep in water; but it seemed to offer promising shelter, and so some officers and men made a rush for it, meaning to take cover. They had no sooner scrambled into the ditch and were thinking themselves comparatively safe than the Germans got the range of them with machine-guns, and nearly the whole lot were annihilated. In this case, as in others, the enemy had been marvellously quick with their weapons, and had swept the ditch with bullets. I don't know what happened to the fine fellows who had fallen. We had to leave them and continue the advance.

THE forenoon passed, noon came, and the afternoon was with us; still the fighting went on, the guns on both sides crashing without cessation, and the machine-guns and the rifles rattling on without a break. The air was filled with screaming, bursting shells and whistling bullets, and the ground was ploughed and torn everywhere. It was horrible beyond expression, yet it fired the blood in us, so that the only thing



SCOTS SCOUTS WAIT TO GO FORWARD

Very different from the ordinary conception of a battlefield is this scene near Gheluvelt, photographed on October 20, 1914, the men, a strong scouting party of Scots Guards, are lying prone because the German artillery is at work. They are waiting orders to move forward. In such unspoilt country as this the hedges, trees and buildings made the work of scouts attempting to discover enemy movements one of extraordinary difficulty.

Imperial War Museum

that mattered was to put the finish to the work, get up to the Germans, and rout them out of their positions.

At last, after endless spells of lying down and jumping up, we got near enough to make it possible to charge, and the order went round to get ready. We now saw what big, fine fellows we had to tackle. Clearly now we could distinguish the enemy infantry, and a thing that particularly struck me just then was that their bayonets looked very cruel. The Germans wore cloth-covered brass helmets, and through the cloth we could see the gleam of the brass in the sunshine.

The nearer we got, the more clearly we saw what splendid chaps they were, and what a desperate business it would be when we actually reached the long, snaky blades of steel—much longer than our own bayonets—with longer rifles, too, so that the Germans had the pull of us in every way. But all that counted as nothing, and there was not a man amongst us who was not hungering to be in amongst them.

The order to fix bayonets came quietly, and was carried out without any fuss, just as a part of the day's work.

MAKING SURE OF ONE PRISONER

In the early days of the war, " Jerry " did not surrender as easily as he did in the later stages, when half-trained youths took the place of the men who fought in 1914—the flower of the German Army. This man is marching down, by no means unwillingly, between his guards, on the first stage of his journey to the base, with a prison camp in England as his final destination for the " duration."

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SCOTSMEN OF 'THE GLORIOUS SEVENTH' DIVISION

The great story of how the 7th Division were rushed up to the front to make a stand against the massed might of the German army, and how they mowed them down in "walls of corpses," is told in page 213.

Here are two regiments of the Scottish Brigade of that heroic division. Above, Royal Scots Fusiliers are making cover when the division fell back and entrenched themselves eight miles east of the Gheluvelt cross roads, while, right, the 2nd Scots Guards are testing a trench at Ghent, where they had been sent to cover the retirement of the Naval Brigade and Belgian troops from Antwerp.

Photos, C. Pilkington



BOUND FOR THE MAELSTROM OF YPRES

British soldiers got the friendliest of welcomes from the people of the countryside as they marched towards the battlefields. Here, in front of a small farm, men of the 2nd Scots Guards, 7th Division, are snatching a brief rest and a hasty meal during the march from Thielt to Roulers on October 13, 1914. Two days later the division took its place in the line about five miles east of Ypres and was in the thick of the fighting.

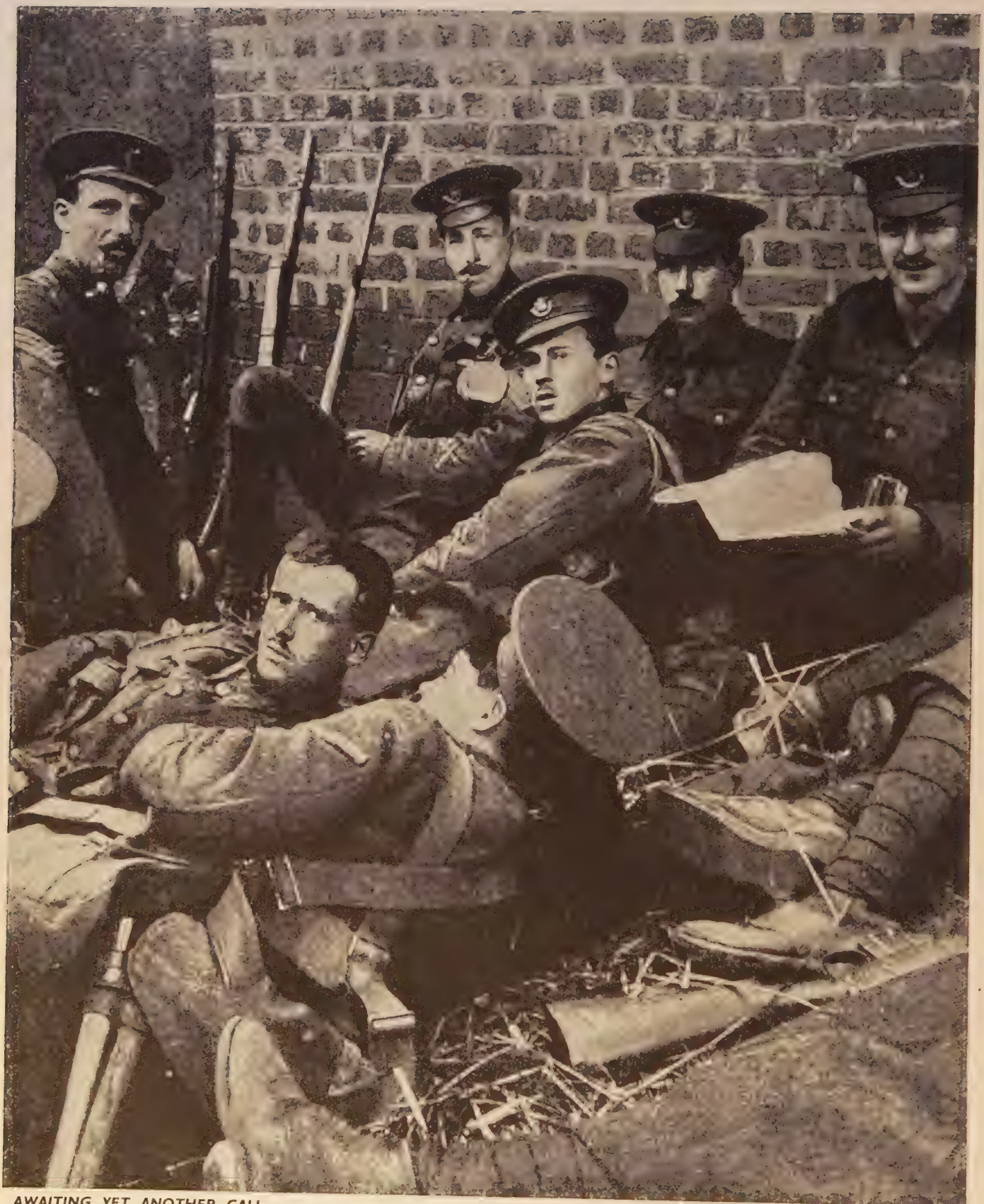
War Museum



WHEN THE BEST NEWS WAS HOME NEWS

In the pauses of battle the two things that mattered most to Tommy were rations and letters, and there were but few men who would not rather have had their letters from home than their rations. Here, during the first battle of Ypres, in October 1914, the mail is being distributed to men of the [illegible] Infantry Brigade at [illegible] farmhouse. They wanted all the news from home, though a "field postcard" might be all the reply they could make.

Imperial War Museum



AWAITING YET ANOTHER CALL

Pilkington

The nightmare of war was but in its early stages when this picture of men of the famous Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry was taken. While shrapnel, hurled by enemy batteries, scatters near by, the troops take cover with easy nonchalance behind a house used as Brigade headquarters. Later, following urgent orders, a company of this regiment, with others of the Royal Sussex, rushed forward to stem the German attempt to enfilade the British trenches during the first battle of Ypres.

We were lying down when the order came, and as we lay we got round at our bayonets, drew them and fixed them, and I could hear the rattle of the fixing all along the line, just as I had heard it many times on parade or at manœuvres—the same sound, but with what a different purpose!

A few of the fellows did not fix their bayonets as we lay, but they managed to do it as we ran, when we had jumped up and started to rush along to put the finish to the fight. There was no bugle sound, we just got the word to charge, an order which was given to the whole of the Seventh Division.

When this last part of the advance arrived we started halloaing and shouting, and the division simply hurled itself against the Prussian Guard. By the time we were up with the enemy we were mad. I can't tell you much of what actually happened—and I don't think any man who took part in it could do so—but I do know that we rushed helter-skelter, and that when we got up to the famous Guards there were only two of my own section holding together—Lance-Corporal Perry and myself, and even we were parted immediately afterwards.

The next thing I clearly knew was that we were actually on the Prussians, and that there was some very fierce work going on. There was some terrific and deadly scrimmaging, and whatever the Prussian Guard did in the way of handling the steel, the Seventh Division did better.

It was every man for himself. I had rushed up with the rest, and the first thing I clearly knew was that a tremendous Prussian was making at me with his villainous bayonet. I made a lunge at him as hard and swift as I could, and he did the same to me. I thought I had him, but I just missed, and as I did so I saw his own long, ugly blade driven out at the end of his rifle. Before I could do anything to parry the thrust, the tip of the bayonet had ripped across my right thigh, and I honestly thought that it was all up with me.

Then, when I reckoned that my account was paid, when I supposed that the huge Prussian had it all his own way, one of our chaps—I don't know who, I don't suppose I ever shall; but I bless him—rushed up, drove his bayonet into the Prussian and settled him. I am sure that if this had not been done I should have been killed by the Prussian; as it was, I was able to get away without much inconvenience at the end of the bayonet fight.

This struggle lasted about half an hour, and fierce, hard work it was all the time. In the end we drove the Guards away and sent them flying—all except those who had fallen; the trench was full of the latter, and we took no prisoners.

Then soon we were forced to retire ourselves, for the quite sufficient reason that we were not strong enough to hold the position that we had taken at such a heavy cost. The enemy did not know it then, though perhaps they found out later, that we had nicely deceived them in making them believe that we had reinforcements. But we had nothing of the sort; yet we had stormed and taken the position and driven its defenders away.

GROUND LITTERED WITH DEAD

We were far too weak to hold the position, and so we retired over the ground that we had won, getting back a great deal faster than we had advanced. We had spent the best part of the day in advancing and reaching the enemy's position; and it seemed as if we must have covered a great tract of country, but as a matter of fact we had advanced less than a mile. It had taken us many hours to cover that short distance, but along the whole of the long line of the advance the ground was littered with the fallen—the officers and men who had gone down under such a storm of shells and bullets as had not been known since the war began.

Retiring, we took up a position behind a wood, and were thinking that we should get a bit of a rest, when a German aeroplane came flying over us, gave our hiding-place away, and brought upon us a fire that drove us out and sent us back to three lines of trenches which we had been occupying.

We made the best of things during the evening and the night in the trenches. The next day things were reversed, for the Germans came on against us; but we kept up a furious fight, and simply mowed them down as they threw themselves upon us. We used to say: "Here comes another bunch of 'em!" and then we gave them the "mad minute." We had

TINNED GIFTS FOR THE ENEMY

When munitions were short, British Tommies proved themselves men of resource, and they improvised hand grenades from empty tobacco tins, which were just the right size and made a very effective missile. Jam tins were also used. The tins were filled with a high explosive such as ammonal, and nails or any scrap metal that was available. Here a fuse is being fitted to a home-made grenade.

L.N.A





WHAT NEWS OF OUR WAR?

It was one of the ironies of war that the men in the front line knew less of its real progress than those at home who had never seen a shot fired. To such men as those seen in this photograph the war news was that of their own sector: an attack met and repulsed; a word of mouth casualty list. It was only when newspapers came from home that they knew the war news that really mattered, the real progress made. These men of the 7th Division are eagerly reading the last papers from home during a wayside halt near Ypres during the tense days of October 1914.

Imperial War Museum

suffered heavily on the 31st, and we were to pay a big bill on this November 1, amongst our casualties being two of our senior officers.

THE second day of the fighting passed and the third came. Still we held on, but it became clear that we were too hopelessly outnumbered to hope for complete success at the time, and so we were forced to leave the trenches. Withdrawing again, we took up positions in farmhouses and woods and any other places that gave shelter. All the time there was a killing fire upon us, and it happened that entire bodies of men would be wiped out in a few moments. A party of the Warwicks got into a wood near us, and they had no sooner taken shelter than the German gunners got the range of them, shelled them, and killed nearly all of them.

There was not a regiment of the Glorious Seventh that had not suffered terribly in the advance during the three days' fateful fighting. The Bedfords had lost, all told, about 600, and it was a mere skeleton of the battalion that formed up when the roll was called.

I became a member of the grenade company of the battalion, which was something like going back to the early days of the Army, when the grenadier companies of the regiments flung their little bombs at the enemy. So did we, and grim work it was, hurling home-made bombs, which had the power of doing a terrible amount of mischief.

MERRY PARTY SPOILT

I WAS with the grenade company, behind a brick wall close to the trenches, and was sitting with several others round a fire which we had made in a biscuit-tin. We were quite a merry party, and had the dixie going to make some tea. There was another dixie on, with two or three nice chickens that our fellows had got hold of—perhaps they had seen them wandering about homeless and adopted them.

Anyway, they found a good home in the stew-pot, and we were looking forward to a most cosy meal.

The Germans were close enough to fling hand-bombs at us. They gave us lots of these little attentions, so that, when I suddenly found myself blinded, and felt a sharp pain in my left hand, I thought they had made a lucky shot, or that something had exploded in the fire in the biscuit-tin.

FOR some time I did not know what had happened; then I was able to see, and on looking at my hand, I found it to be in a sorry mess, half the thumb and half a finger having been carried away.

I stayed and had some tea from the dixie, and my chums badly wanted me to wait for my share of the chickens; but I had no appetite for fowls just then. I made the best of things till darkness came, and under cover of it a couple of stretcher-bearers took me to the nearest dressing-station.

I suffered terribly, and lockjaw set in, but the splendid medical staff and the nursing saved me, and I was put into a horse ambulance and packed off home

FRENCH'S 'WORST HALF-HOUR'

The Worcesters Saved the Day at Gheluvelt

by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke, M.C.

A GREAT gap was made in the British line when on the morning of October 31, 1914, the Germans captured Gheluvelt. As a forlorn hope the 2nd Worcestershire, almost the last available reserve of the whole British defence, were ordered to counter-attack and recapture the village. How three companies of the Worcestershire, charging over open ground through a hail of fire, restored the British line at a time which Sir John French afterwards described as the worst half-hour of his life, is here vividly told by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke, M.C., the historian of the Regiment

DAYBREAK of October 31st was calm and clear. The 2nd Worcestershire, in their reserve position west of the Polygon Wood, were roused early by the crash of gun-fire. The troops turned out, breakfasts were cooked and eaten, weapons were cleaned and inspected. Then for several hours the companies lay idle about their billets, listening to the ever-increasing bombardment and watching the German shrapnel bursting in black puffs of smoke above the tree-tops.

The 2nd Worcestershire were almost the last available reserve of the British defence. Nearly every other unit had been drawn into the battle-line or had been broken beyond recovery ; and to an onlooker that last reserve would not have seemed very formidable. The battalion could muster not more than 500 men. Ten days of battle had left all ranks haggard, unshaven and unwashed ; their uniforms had been soaked in the mud of the Langemarck trenches and torn by the brambles of Polygon Wood ; many had lost their puttees or their caps. But their weapons were clean and in good order, they had plenty of ammunition, and three months of war had given them confidence in their fighting power. The short period in reserve had allowed them sleep and food. That crowd of ragged soldiers was still a fighting battalion, officers and men bound together by that proud and willing discipline which is the soul of the regiment.

HOUR by hour the thunder of the guns grew more intense. Stragglers and wounded from beyond the wood brought news that a great German attack was in progress. The enemy infantry were coming on in overwhelming numbers [thirteen German battalions took part in this attack, of which six were fresh and at full strength] against the remnants of the five British battalions, together mustering barely a thousand men, which were holding the trenches about the Menin road.

Before midday weight of numbers had told. The Queen's and the Royal Scots Fusiliers had fought to the last, the Welch and the K.R.R.C. had been overwhelmed, the right flank of the South Wales Borderers had been rolled back. Gheluvelt had been lost, and a great gap had been broken in the British line. Unless that gap could be closed, the British army was doomed to disaster.

SO serious was the situation caused by the loss of Gheluvelt that orders were issued for the British artillery to move back in preparation for a general retreat. At the same time it was decided that a counter-attack against the lost position should be made by the 2nd Worcestershire.

Brigadier-General C. FitzClarence, V.C., was in command of the front about the Menin road. Soon after midday he sent for the officers of the 2nd Worcestershire to take orders. Major Hankey sent his Adjutant, Captain B. C. Senhouse Clarke. Twenty minutes later Captain Senhouse Clarke returned, bringing word that the battalion would probably be wanted for a counter-attack, and that meanwhile one company was to be detached to prevent the enemy from advancing up the Menin road.

"A" Company was detailed for the latter duty. Led by Captain P. S. G. Wainman, the company advanced at 12.45 p.m. to a position on the embankment of the light railway north-west of Gheluvelt. The company held the embankment during the following two hours, firing rapidly at such of the enemy as attempted to advance beyond the houses.

ABOUT 1 p.m. Major Hankey was summoned by General FitzClarence, and was given definite orders. The 2nd Worcestershire were to make a counter-attack to regain the lost British positions around Gheluvelt. General FitzClarence pointed out the church in Gheluvelt as a landmark for the advance, explained that the situation was desperate and that speed was essential. . . . At 2 p.m. the battalion moved off in file, led by Major Hankey and Captain Thorne, along under cover of the trees to the south-west corner of Polygon Wood [about 1½ miles N. of Gheluvelt].

From that corner of the wood the ground to the south-eastward is clear and open, falling to the little valley of the Rentelbeek and rising again to the bare ridge above Polderhoek. That ridge hid from view the château of Gheluvelt, and the exact situation there was unknown ; but further to the right



MOST GALLANT LEADER

When, on the last day of October 1914, the British line near Gheluvelt was in direst peril, Brigadier-General C. FitzClarence, V.C., saved the situation by masterly and daring action as told in this chapter. An officer of magnificent spirit, he inspired all who served under him. He was killed while reconnoitring on November 12, 1914.



THERE WERE FIELDS AND HEDGEROWS THEN NEAR YPRES

The leaves were still on the trees when the British Army first came to the Ypres salient. Defences were rough and ready, such as those above on a road near Ypres, but with machine-guns planted at the other end a barrier of trees could prove a nasty obstacle to the approaching enemy. The unspoiled country afforded, too, excellent cover such as the thick hedge seen below which is being used by two infantrymen.

Imperial War Museum



could be seen the church tower rising amid the smoke of the burning village.

The open ground was dotted with wounded and stragglers coming back from the front. In every direction German shells were bursting. British batteries could be seen limbering up and moving to the rear. Everywhere there were signs of retreat. The Worcestershire alone were moving towards the enemy. But the three companies tramped grimly forward down into the valley of the Rentelbeek.

BEYOND a little wood the battalion deployed, "C" and "D" Companies in front line, with "B" Company in second line behind—about 370 all told. In front of them rose the bare slope of the Polderhoek Ridge. The ridge was littered with dead and wounded, and along its crest the enemy's shells were bursting in rapid succession. Major Hankey decided that the only way of crossing that deadly stretch of ground was by one long rush. The companies extended into line and advanced.

The ground underfoot was rank grass or rough stubble. The two leading companies broke into a steady double and swept forward across the open, the officers leading on in front, and behind them their men with fixed bayonets in one long irregular line. As they reached the crest, the rushing wave of bayonets was sighted by the hostile infantry beyond.

A storm of shells burst along the ridge, shrapnel bullets rained down and high-explosive shells crashed into the charging line. Men fell at every pace; over a hundred of the battalion were killed or wounded: the rest dashed on. The speed of the rush increased as on the downward slope the troops came in sight of Gheluvelt château close in front. The platoons scrambled across the light railway, through some hedges and wire fences, and then in the grounds of the château they closed with the enemy.

THEY GAVE WAY AT OUR CHARGE

THE enemy were ill-prepared to meet the charge. The German infantry were crowded in disorder among the trees of the park, their attention divided between exploring the outhouses and surrounding the remnant of the British defenders; for the musketry of the defence still swept the lawn in front of the château. The enemy's disorder was increased by a sharp and accurate fire of shrapnel from British batteries behind Polygon Wood.

The Germans were young troops of newly formed units. Probably they had lost their best leaders earlier in the day,

for they made no attempt to stand their ground and face the counter-attack. They gave way at once before the onslaught of the British battalion and crowded back out of the grounds of the château into the hedgerows behind. Shooting and stabbing, " C " Company of the Worcestershire charged across the lawn and came up into line with the gallant remnant of the South Wales Borderers.

The South Wales Borderers had made a wonderful stand. All day they had held their ground at the château, and they were still stubbornly fighting, although almost surrounded by the enemy. Their resistance had delayed and diverted the German advance, and the success of the counter-attack was largely due to their brave defence.

THE meeting of the two battalions was unexpected. The Worcestershire had not known that any of the South Wales Borderers were still holding out. Major Hankey went over to their commander, and found him to be Colonel H. E. Burleigh Leach, an old friend. " My God, fancy meeting you here ! " said Major Hankey, and Colonel Burleigh Leach replied quietly, " Thank God, you have come."

The routed enemy were hunted out of the hedges and across the open fields beyond the château. " C " and " D " Companies of the Worcestershire took up positions in the sunken road which runs past the grounds. " B " Company was brought up and prolonged the line to the right.

But the village of Gheluvelt, on the slope above the right flank, was still in the enemy's hands. Most of the German troops in the village seem to have been drawn northwards by the fighting around the château, but a certain number of Saxons of the 242nd Regiment had remained in the village, whence they opened a fire which took the sunken road in enfilade. To silence that fire Major Hankey sent fighting patrols from the front line into the village. Those patrols drove back the German snipers and took some prisoners ; but it became clear that the position in the sunken road would be unsafe until the village was secured. Accordingly, Major Hankey sent orders to Captain Wainman that " A " Company were to advance from their defensive position and occupy the village.

Captain Wainman led forward his company and, after some sharp fighting among burning buildings and bursting shells, occupied a new line with his left flank in touch with the right of the position in the sunken road and his right flank in the village, holding the church and the churchyard. Thence he sent forward patrols to clear the village. . . .

IT was not possible permanently to occupy the centre of the village, for it was being bombarded by both the German and the British artillery. On all sides houses were burning, roofs falling and walls collapsing. The stubborn Saxons still held some small posts in scattered houses of the south-eastern outskirts. Nevertheless, the enemy's main force had been driven out, and the peril of a collapse of the British defence about the Menin road had been averted. . . .

About 6 p.m. came fresh orders from General FitzClarence. The General had decided to withdraw his defensive line from the forward slope of the ridge at Gheluvelt to a new position farther back at Veldhoek, where the trenches would be sheltered from direct observation of the German artillery.

ARRANGEMENTS were made in conjunction with the South Wales Borderers, and the retirement was begun. One by one, at intervals of ten minutes, the companies withdrew from their positions. In the darkness they assembled under cover and then tramped back along the Menin road to Veldhoek. . . . As the last company of the 2nd Worcestershire marched back out of the village, several of the houses were still burning, and the darkness was torn at intervals by the blaze of bursting shells. . . .

The day's fighting had cost the 2nd Worcestershire a third of the Battalion's remaining strength, for 187 of all ranks had been killed or wounded ; but their achievement had been worthy of that sacrifice. Their counter-attack had thrown back the enemy at a moment which the British Commander-in-Chief afterwards called " the worst half-hour of my life." In all probability that counter-attack saved Ypres from capture and the British army from defeat.

HIGHWAY OF IMPERISHABLE MEMORIES

Through the village of Gheluvelt (Geluveld) stretches the Menin road, seen here as it is today. It was along this highway that so much terrible fighting took place in 1914, and later in the third battle of Ypres in 1917. By their magnificent attack and routing of the enemy from Gheluvelt men of the Worcestershire Regiment earned undying fame in the annals of the B.E.F.—and ended French's " worst half-hour."

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



I SAW the TRAGEDY of CORONEL

by J. D. Stephenson

Sick Berth Steward, H.M.S. Glasgow

THE battle of Coronel on November 1, 1914, was a sad blow to the hopes of the British Navy. Admiral Cradock's encounter with the German Admiral von Spee's squadron off Coronel led to the loss of the flagship, Good Hope, and the cruiser Monmouth, the British admiral going down with his ship. H.M.S. Glasgow was in the thick of the fight but managed to escape. Thrilling incidents of the defeat, later to be avenged at the battle of the Falkland Islands, are here narrated by a sick berth steward, J. D. Stephenson, who was aboard H.M.S. Glasgow



HE FOUGHT TO A FINISH

At the Battle of Coronel Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock maintained the highest traditions of the Royal Navy. It was of him and his comrades that Mr. Arthur Balfour, then First Lord of the Admiralty, said: "Theirs is an immortal place in the great roll of naval heroes."

Elliott and Fry

OUR commission on the South American station was just ending when the news that war had been declared reached us. Jack always likes to bring some mementoes home of his voyages, and in anticipation of an early return to England our men had been ashore at Rio de Janeiro buying curios. Parrots galore screamed on our mess-deck, all ditty-boxes were packed with gifts for friends at home, and the men were light-heartedly talking of the good times they would have in dear old "Pompey," when the fateful message arrived that swept away those rosy visions and put the grim visage of war before our faces.

Were we disappointed? Not at all! A sailor's business is to fight, and nothing better fits his humour than a chance of doing so. The knowledge that the long-expected "scrap" with Germany had come at last filled us all on board the Glasgow with pleasurable excitement, and the orders to "clear for action" were joyfully obeyed. The parrots were liberated, all other disposable gear got rid of, and we put to sea ready for anything that might come along.

FOR two months we had a disappointing time. Although we searched hard we found nothing in the shape of an enemy. Then we captured a prize worth a quarter of a million, and that sent our spirits up with a bound. About this time we received information that the German cruiser Dresden, having sunk a British merchantman, was making her way from the Moroccan coast towards the south-east coast of America. Off we went after her.

So far we had been cruising alone. Now the Monmouth joined us, and glad we were to see her, as she was the first vessel of our Fleet that we had encountered for a very long time. Followed by the Monmouth we proceeded to Santa Cattarina, six hundred miles to the north, where we heard the Dresden was coaling. On the way there we got into touch with the Good Hope, commanded by Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock.

At Santa Cattarina we found no trace of the Dresden. The message we had received was a German wireless "fake." Together with the Good Hope and the Monmouth we turned our bows south, and searched for the enemy in every likely hiding-place until we came to Port Edgar, in the Falkland Isles, where we stayed a few days.

LURED ACROSS THE SEAS

HERE the rumour came to us that the Dresden had gone to South America; therefore we made for Punta Arenas, the most southerly town on the mainland. "She has gone towards Cape Horn," was the news that greeted us there, and off we dashed after her. Some two days later we entered a place where our quarry was supposed to be hiding, but again she had eluded us. Everybody felt a bit sick at this.

Apparently the admiral did also, for he signalled to the squadron, "The admiral shares with the officers and ship's companies of the squadron their great disappointment at not being brought into action. Nevertheless, the capture of the enemy is but a matter of time." His statement proved true, but the time was a long one, and the Dresden was to lure us over many weary miles yet.

Leaving the chilly neighbourhood of Punta Arenas we went up the west coast. It was about this time we learned that the German armoured cruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau had been driven from Chinese waters by the Japanese, and were on the way to South America. In order to meet these powerful opponents we understood that we were to be reinforced by stronger units of our own Fleet, as all our squadron were small vessels.

Continuing our search of the coast, we arrived at Valparaiso, where we stayed for twenty-four hours in order to provision and get mails, none of which had reached us for two months. From Valparaiso we went southward again, and called at Coronel, where several German ships were interned. As we entered this harbour at night a boat shot shoreward from one of the German vessels, and half an hour later a fire blazed up on one of the hills close by. "That's a signal to some enemy ship outside!" exclaimed one of our men, and undoubtedly his surmise was right. Little did we think at the time what that signal meant or what a mournful tragedy the morrow held in store for us.

LEAVING Coronel at 10 a.m. we picked up the Good Hope, the Monmouth, and the Otranto in about two hours. A very rough sea was running at the time. Boats could not be lowered, and papers for the admiral had to be conveyed to the Good Hope in a small cask, which was towed across her bows. While doing this we came close to the Good Hope and got our last clear look at her crew, although none of us at the time thought that we were bidding our comrades in the flagship a last farewell.

Knowing the enemy to be somewhere in the vicinity, Admiral Cradock opened his squadron to visual distance. The Glasgow turned northward and reached

the extreme right. About 4 p.m. we discovered three enemy ships by their smoke, and promptly reported the matter to the admiral. Boisterous weather still prevailed, but the sun was shining brilliantly.

Admiral Cradock took the lead in his flagship, directing the Monmouth, Glasgow, and Otranto to fall in behind him in the order named and advance upon the enemy. While getting into line the Monmouth passed quite close on our port side where I was standing, and we could see her men at their stations. Stalwart Royal Marines manned her after gun. They were stripped to their flannels ready for the fight, and seemed glad to be going into it. As they swept past our ship the Marines light-heartedly called out "Good old Pompey!" This being a reference to the fact that nearly all Admiral Cradock's ships were manned by Portsmouth crews. We gave the men of the Monmouth a hearty answer to their greeting as their ship forged ahead of ours.

On towards the enemy we went, with the challenge to action flying at the masthead, but the German ships did not appear anxious to accept it. By this time their number had increased to four, and they were clearly manoeuvring to get the advantage of the light, a thing which their superior speed enabled them to do successfully much to the disadvantage of the British Admiral.

WHILE the sun shone upon the German ships it made them a good mark for our gunners, so they held off out of range until the sun, setting behind our squadron, silhouetted its ships upon the skyline and made them conspicuous targets. Admiral Cradock could not prevent this move, for the enemy was his superior in all points of manoeuvring power. When the action opened I was on the upper deck watching the enemy's ships in the distance.

Immediately the light was in their favour the Germans opened the action by directing some ranging shots at the Otranto. [The Otranto was a merchant vessel, armed with only four 4·7-in. guns.] Realizing that the Otranto would fall an easy prey to the enemy if she stayed in the firing-line, Admiral Cradock ordered her to make her escape. Now the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau concentrated their fire upon the Good Hope and the Monmouth, whilst the two smaller German ships turned all their guns upon the Glasgow with devastating effect.

MERCILESS ONSLAUGHT

IT was a most unequal contest, one in which our ships had no earthly chance of winning. Admiral von Spee's squadron contained the best-trained gunners in the German Navy. His guns were heavier and could easily outrange ours. Consequently he was able to keep his ships clear of our salvos, whilst his own shot pounded our vessels to pieces. We were also heavily handicapped by the fact that owing to the bad weather our ships, especially the Good Hope and the Monmouth, rolled so heavily that their mess-deck guns were nearly always under water and out of action. The larger cruisers of the enemy did not suffer from this disability, and his gun-power, preponderating in any case, was thus rendered crushingly overwhelming as compared with our own. We were indeed facing fearful odds.

When trying to describe the scene now looked on, one realizes the feebleness of words.

We were fighting elements that were against us and a formidable enemy whom we could not reach. Night was falling. How we wished its dark shades would



THE ONE GERMAN SEA VICTOR

Admiral von Spee won the only complete victory achieved by the German Navy during the war when, by superior armaments, he destroyed Admiral Cradock's squadron at Coronel on November 1, 1914, only to meet his death at the Falkland Islands on December 8, going down there with his ship.



FLAGSHIP IN A HOPELESS FIGHT

Sir Christopher Cradock's first flagship when he was in command of the 4th Cruiser Squadron on the North America station was H.M.S. Suffolk, a cruiser of 9,800 tons, but on August 13 he transferred his flag to H.M.S. Good Hope, seen above, an armoured cruiser of 14,000 tons, but over twelve years old. The Good Hope was blown up with the loss of the Admiral and all the crew during the hopeless but heroic fight at Coronel.

hasten down and thus give us a chance of coming to closer grips with the foe while our ships were still capable of effective action!

Around the Glasgow enemy projectiles fell like hail. Salvo after salvo plunged into the water near by, just missing the ship as she rolled. And all the time we could see the doomed Good Hope being struck by shell upon shell and only able to reply with one or two of her guns.

For the enemy, firing at her was merely so much target practice, and while we, with feelings that can well be imagined, watched her being thus mercilessly battered, there came the roar of an explosion, a burst of flame lit up the centre of the Good Hope, her funnels with the surrounding structure seemed to fly up into the air—then came darkness and empty sea where she had lain struggling heroically against fearful odds.

Our brave little flagship had been blotted out; battered into the ocean depths by sheer weight of enemy metal would, perhaps, be a more accurate way of describing the end.

ANGER at the loss of the Good Hope stimulated the Glasgow's crew to greater efforts. Our fire had the effect of making one of the German light cruisers that was attacking us fall out of line, but her place was at once taken by a third light cruiser which had now joined von Spee. Very soon, also, the damaged vessel had patched up sufficiently to resume, and the Glasgow fought all three of them at the one time.

Both the German armoured cruisers had now turned their guns against the Monmouth, presumably thinking that their smaller consorts were good enough to finish us. But they were not, even in the proportion of three to one. All the same, they gave us a nasty battering. One shell from them passed above our sick bay, burst in the captain's cabin and wrecked it. Another struck us on the port side aft, just missed a propeller, and made a hole in the ship's side which was big enough to push a hand-truck through.

SO much damage did this shell cause that we had to prop up our deck with beams to keep it from falling in. Yet another shell missed one of our main steam pipes by only a hand's breadth. If it had not missed the pipe there would have been no Glasgow left to tell the tale of the Coronel fight. Six men who were at a gun close by where this shell burst had a miraculous escape, being only slightly injured by it. We also got two shells in our coal bunkers, but as the latter were full these shots did little harm.



REVERTED TO FIGHT

Herbert de Hamel, author of this brilliant account of the first action in which the London Scottish were engaged, reverted from the rank of sergeant to private so that he might be sent to France with the first battalion. He was severely wounded in this battle. He wrote the famous play "War Mates" in 1915.

BLOOD BATH of LONDON SCOTS

Immortal Story of a Territorial Regiment

by Pte. Herbert de Hamel

THE first London Territorial battalion to engage the enemy were the London Scottish, who came into action near Messines during the first battle of Ypres. They bore the brunt of the fiercest German attacks with the utmost gallantry. Surrounded on three sides they fought to the bitter end, losing 345 men but accounting for hundreds of Germans. The wonderful story of pluck and endurance which follows was written by a survivor who, though wounded, succeeded with his officer and eight other ranks in eluding capture. The London Scottish were warmly congratulated for their gallantry

OCTOBER 31, 1914.—Our captain called us round him. The British front was hard pressed, he said, and the "Scottish" were to take up a position with the Regulars. They were relying on us to hold back the Germans from our little bit of front. He wisely made no effort to disguise the seriousness of the situation or the danger ahead of us. He congratulated us on the honour that had been bestowed on us and expressed his firm belief that the regiment would hold out till ordered to retire.

Shortly after the battalion had marched out of St. Eloi it left the high-road and went across country till it reached a long low-lying hill, with its steep side covered with trees, bracken and brambles. Here we were halted and told to lie down. The air was full of a drowsy rumbling and muttering of guns. The sound was a distant one, but full of a strange uneasiness. Personally I found myself wishing that it were either a long way farther off, or a long way nearer.

I rolled over and went to sleep. I was awakened by my right ankle sliding down the slope, followed by the rest of my anatomy. The banging of the guns sounded far closer. I don't know if I had been dreaming of Germans, but I was by no means sorry to hear a cheery voice cry, "Wake up, old son, we're falling in."

We marched down a grassy road between trees stripped of their bark and with their trunks strangely fluted and grooved by bullets. Then on past a prosperous-looking farm tenanted by incongruously ragged folk who reaped a harvest of discarded articles at our next halt.

From this a German aeroplane drove us to the cover of a wood. No sooner had I settled down for another sleep than we were off again, followed by the aeroplane, till we reached the village of Wytschaete. The battalion passed through, I believe, in safety, all save the last company. On our right were houses. On our left was a steep bank above which rose the church tower.

Big shells began to fall round us. The first two pitched beyond us, the next three crashed among the houses, throwing up clouds of dust, smoke and debris, the next one hit the church tower. . . .

The sight of the peasants rushing away down the main street in a panic



L.N.A.

WHEN WOULD THEY BE CLEAN AGAIN?

This placid scene in which kilted London Scottish men are shown washing themselves and their personal belongings in a wayside trough in an occupied town conveys nothing of the hardships through which they had gone nor which they were destined to face but a few days later as told by Mr. de Hamel in this chapter. While they thus enjoyed a brief respite, the ominous sounds and sights of war spread along the line, forbidding and relentless.

brought home the tragic side of the bombardment.

A second shell struck the church tower, or part of the roof, and the fragments flew over us. Matters were becoming unpleasantly warm, when a staff officer was struck by an idea—and he waved to us to advance. As we marched up the street a house was shattered with a deafening noise close to the section in front of us. At this point occurred, I believe, the first casualties the regiment sustained. Some were carried into the cellars of the houses and others handed over to a section of native stretcher-bearers that had waited by us.

THEN on went the company across fields, where picks and shovels lying on the grass spoke of a hasty scattering under shrapnel in the open, till we reached the rest of the battalion, standing close in by a hedge-bordered wood, waiting motionless every time a Taube sailed over us.

Behind the shelter of a hill we adopted column formation. The companies extended one by one and marched over the brow. Bullets began to fly pretty thickly over us, and they and the shrapnel grew more and more frequent as company after company breasted the ridge.

As our company, the last one, came over the top, we could see our battalion ahead of us. The first two companies had closed and were lying down behind the next ridge. The others advanced in extended lines below us. The distance and the dressing were more perfect than at any field-day inspection at home. The lines marched steadily onwards through the roots. . . .

At last we reached dead ground, closed, and lay down. Once again the companies rose, extended, and passed over the brow of this second hill into what must have been a very blizzard of bullets.

In front of us sat Colonel Malcolm [Col. G. A. Malcolm, D.S.O., Commanding 1st Batt. London Scottish] chatting calmly to a staff officer. Every now and then he glanced half-anxiously along our line to see how we were taking it.

Near him sat two burly Life Guardsmen keeping watch and ward over a condemned man. He it was—a surly, black-bearded peasant — who had worked the sails of a windmill, and so brought down the big shells on Wytschaete. This little attention had, I am told, been intended for the Lincolns, who passed through the village ahead of us.

I cannot vouch for this. All I can vouch for is that the shells were duly delivered.

. . . . . .

HE WAS SURPRISED AND HURT

JUST as our turn came to follow on over the hill a staff officer ran up on our left and pointed back in the direction whence he had come. Wherefore the senior subaltern took his half company off to this new quarter. At first we were under cover. Then shell holes appeared in the ground and bullets began to pass us. One man sat down and commenced to bandage his legs—his expression one of surprised indignation.

Eventually we came to an open road and lay down in the ditch on the near side. It was a very shallow ditch, and we started to dig ourselves in.

. . . . . .

A sudden increase in the output of shrapnel puzzled me, till I realized that



BRIEF INTERLUDE BEFORE THE FATEFUL HOURS OF WYTSCHAETE

Sprawled at ease and enjoying an alfresco meal on a French railway station, these London Scottish Territorials seem contented enough with their lot as they await their next move. When they engaged the Germans around Messines during the first battle of Ypres the London Scottish displayed a courage, a devotion to duty and high discipline, and while this, their first experience of battle, brought them grievous losses, the story of their deeds remains imperishable, some of the most remarkable of which are told in this chapter.



SITE OF VALIANT ADVENTURE

The remnants of the concrete strongpoint, seen in the foreground of this picture, serve to remind the casual passer-by today that across this undulating landscape the storm of war once raged. In the background stands Wytschaete, a village ever to be remembered by the London Scottish, for it was here that men of this Territorial regiment came under frightful fire as they made their way forward in the gallant action of October 1914, that is so vividly described in this stirring chapter.

Photo. A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

the senior subaltern had strolled along to our end of the ditch. He lay down and told us he wanted ten men to come with him to occupy a small trench in front of us. It had been held by natives [Indian troops] till their officers had been killed.

When the noise had quieted down he took the end ten men with him. We jumped up and started to double forward. "I think we'd better walk. It looks better," he remarked. So we walked towards a haystack that gave us some cover from sight. Once past this, things became more lively and our C.O. [the officer commanding this section in the field] took us on at the double.

HE SHOWED NO FEAR

For several hours there was an almost incessant din and concussion of shells. All through that inferno I was held by the pluck of the man next to me. In the very worst moments he was as bright and as cheery as was his usual habit of life. He must have felt afraid, as, of course, we all did, but he showed no sign of it.

After one particularly lively outburst of assorted shells, he remarked, "I suppose that after a couple more days we shall go back into a reserve trench."

"Probably this is a reserve trench," I said, "and tomorrow we shall get into the real thing."

"You always were a cheery blighter," replied Bugler Dunlop, and we both laughed. Two days later I was told of his death out in the open.

. . . . . .

About five o'clock the shelling ceased. The unnatural calm was broken only by the sound of occasional British shells and their distant explosion.

An officer in a native regiment came up to me and asked where he could find the officer in command. I directed him to our senior subaltern. In the dim light he must have mistaken the star for a crown, as he saluted our C.O. most respectfully and urged him to retire to a position in rear of our trench—which latter he described as the worst shell-trap in all the line.

Our C.O. replied that he had orders to hold the trench till the last possible moment, and that he intended so doing.

The captain shrugged his shoulders. "Very well, sir, of course if you insist on staying on here I can do nothing except hold my ground to support you." He saluted and turned away.

. . . . . .

We had deepened the trench and had scooped out hollow caves, but there was no cover in the event of enfilade fire. I was soon hard at work with the others in hewing a traverse at right angles to the end of our trench. It was very slow work, and after a long spell, with only room for one man to work at a time, we had progressed about four or five feet to a depth of five feet, and from that point the traverse ran up to ground level in a gentle slope.

When I ceased digging to take my hour spell at looking out. Two of us stood, side by side, peering into the patchwork of moonlight and shadow, straining our eyes for the least movement. Bullets "phitted" over us, past us, and between us. I felt heartily thankful when my spell came to an end. Our C.O., who could have rested comfortably under cover, shared the whole watch of each successive pair of look-outs.

I debated whether to enlarge my little cave or to enjoy my oft-postponed sleep. I decided on the latter course. I was no sooner curled up than the order came to stand to. A terrific rattle and crackle of rifle and maxim fire broke out. Away in front of us a line of d m figures advanced ghostlike in the moonlight. The C.O. told us to prepare to fire, but to wait for his command. . . .

"Who are you?" shouted the C.O. There was no answer, and he repeated the question. As this met with no reply he sang out to us to open fire. We blazed away into them and I wondered why they lay down in twos and threes to fire back at us. Then it struck me suddenly that they were tumbling over.

They made no attempt to rush us, but still advanced at a steady walk, falling as they came. Flashes spat out along their line, but there was no sound of shout or cry, only the crackling of rifle shots.

THE bullets cut through the hedge in front of us and slapped into the bank behind us as the line came on—and all the while our new rifles jammed and stuck. It might be after one shot or after five shots that we dropped to the bottom of the trench and tugged and banged at the bolt to get it free. Then, as often as not, it would foul the next cartridge from the magazine and refuse to click home. And all the while the dim line was advancing. I am told that all the rifles in the battalion were condemned and exchanged for new ones very shortly afterwards.

After a while there were no more Germans walking towards us, though the heavy firing continued somewhere in the near neighbourhood. Our casualties were a sergeant and a lance-corporal —each, I believe, hit in the eyes. They were taken to the rear in the lull which followed.

At the time I imagined this silence to mean that the German attack had been repulsed, but, according to "The Fighting Territorials," the British line had retired under orders to take up a new position, and the message did not reach the Carabineers or the "Scottish," who were consequently surrounded and cut off and had to fight their way through. I can speak only of what occurred to our own little party.

'GET READY TO CHARGE!'

TO our left a light showed in the window of a house in the village. Other lights appeared in other windows, grew into a blaze and turned red. Flames poured out and burst through the roof. This happened in several houses, till the village was in flames. There was still firing going on, and we waited to see if anything else would happen.

It did. There came a sound of great cheering. "We're charging!" shouted the C.O. "Get ready to join in!"

Some way behind the trench a building blazed brightly. Silhouetted against this, a crowd of dark figures ran past with a curious shambling gait, each man made in the same mould, bent forward under the weight of a heavy pack and crowned with a spiked helmet. It was not our men charging. These men were advancing in the wrong direction.

"They are after the Carabineers," said the C.O. "Double out and open fire on them. We'll try to draw them off, to give our poor beggars a chance of making a stand."

I stopped behind long enough to grab an extra couple of bandoliers, and doubled out after the others. Moonlight is a deceptive form of illumination, and I lay down in careful alinement with a row of turnip-tops and opened fire. After a while it occurred to me that I might be masking the fire of the man next to me. I jumped up and ran back (instead of crawling), and as I was lying down again the old proverb about more haste and less speed hit me a bang in the ribs and thigh with a red-hot poker, and I sat over backwards instead.

Then somebody discovered that the Germans were coming up in a solid mass behind us—so the others doubled back to hold the trench. The people we had fired on had turned on us and were also advancing—and a third lot were bearing down to enfilade us.

I got on my feet and proceeded to hunt diligently for a clip of cartridges which I had dropped. I was festooned with bandoliers and my pouches were full of ammunition, but that clip was the one thing which mattered. Had I hunted about for my sporran, which contained all my worldly wealth, there would have been some sense in the proceeding; but I had not then realized that the bullet which tore away my water-bottle had also robbed me of my sporran, leaving in place of the former an enormous charred hole in my greatcoat.

WHEN I returned to the trench, I sat on the floor. Fortunately there was not room to lie down, or I should, perforce, have remained in that position. The others were firing over both sides of the trench. The Germans blazed away at us from three sides. There was just one solid sound of bullets, a steady wail of changing notes. The junior subaltern, looking back from the ridge, saw a ring of fire round the trench and gave us up for lost.

The other sergeant's rifle jammed permanently. He took mine, but it had jammed also. Then, good fellow that he was, he cut off my greatcoat and my serge to get at my side. Thereby I lost many treasured possessions—in exchange for a small avalanche of sand.

Before he could get at my first-aid bandage the garrison began to evacuate the position. Matters had been hopeless a second before. Then—so I am told—the smoke from a burning stack blew over the trench and hid it from sight after the most approved mythological fashion. I groped for my coat; I groped for my serge, but could not find them. They were very precious to me, but time was more precious still.

Wherefore I left them sadly and, holding on my kilt, climbed the easy slope of the thrice-blessed traverse and joined the C.O., who had stopped to make quite sure that all his men were out.

MY C.O. SAVED ME

WE then made for a high hedge in front of us. The party scattered a little. The sergeant and some of the men found a sunken road and reached our lines in safety.

When we reached the fence the fire opened again. I found a gate and shouted to the others. We went through it and ran into another party of advancing Germans. Turning sharply back along the other side of the fence, we passed through a farmyard unseen by the men who were inside the house, setting fire to it.

Then we reached a nine-foot fence with barbed wire strung through it. The others went over it like a troop of professional monkeys. The C.O. hailed me softly from the far side and refused to go on without me. I cursed him inwardly, because the muscles in my right side were not intact, and I had not even considered the question of gymnastic effort. I managed to climb up the wires with two feet and one hand, reached the top and took a header down into the dark. The C.O. fielded me, and we sat down together in a heap.

In the next field we ran across a company of German soldiers advancing in line upon our left. On our right hand was a hedge, so we were forced to keep straight on. . . . The moonlight was brilliant. We could see their uniforms and their faces and their Pickelhaubes, and could hear them talking together. Our men's bayonets were gleaming on the ends of their rifles and we must have been as plainly visible to them as they to us.

They made no attempt to rush us, and let us reach a road about 200 yards away; then they opened fire on us. I can only conclude that they deliberately waited till they were out of reach of our bayonets before molesting us. Our C.O. was so indignant about it that he was with difficulty restrained from hurling himself and his nine able-bodied followers at them with the bayonet. He left the place with the utmost reluctance, but although a sudden charge



FLOWER OF EASTERN FIGHTERS ON THE WESTERN FRONT

From every quarter of the Empire men came in 1914 to fill the ranks and fight the Allies' cause. In the first battle of Ypres dismounted Indian cavalry, shown above going into action at Hollebeke, fought with great gallantry, and Indian infantry displayed an indomitable spirit at the battle of Messines. Some troops belonging to the 129th Baluchi Regiment are shown below manning a somewhat crude breastwork outside Wytschaete, where, as told in this chapter, they were in action with the London Scottish. The courage and stamina these warriors of the Indian Army displayed under adverse climatic conditions which must have tried them sorely, aroused the admiration of all.

Imperial War Museum





WHERE THE FIRST TERRITORIALS FELL

This beautiful memorial stands on a ridge near Wytschaete. The inscription on the plinth reads " Near this spot, on Halloween 1914, the London Scottish came into action, being the first Territorial battalion to engage the enemy." At the head of the cross is the regimental badge and below the battle honours of the London Scottish. A member of the regiment is here explaining to old war comrades how the battle went.

Photo, W. A. Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.

might have thrown that company into confusion, the place was crawling with additional Germans.

We walked down a road between small trees and struck out again across country. In front of us lay a village . . .

An enormous shell came rattling and snoring over us just as we approached the village. It burst in a blaze of light, and the houses became instantly a mass of flames. Three more shells followed, and two minutes later the whole place was a furnace.

We turned back. . . . After a while we found ourselves on a road with high banks and walked along it. I had dropped back a little behind the others, and so first heard a wild rattle of hoofs on the road.

I shouted a warning that there was an Uhlan coming. They promptly ambushed. A cloaked figure galloped round the corner and pulled his horse back on its haunches as he suddenly found himself looking down nine rifle barrels, and at two bayonets which had jammed and refused to come unfixed.

I think we were all both relieved and disappointed when he turned out to be a corporal in the Household Brigade, riding for reinforcements. He told us that the Germans had simply poured over his regiment and broken through, and that the day was lost. He pointed out the direction of Ypres . . . then he set spurs to his charger and galloped on again.

Following his instructions, we struck out across a dreary, open plain, intersected by water dykes, for all the world like the Norfolk marshes. . . . As we approached the high road on the far side of the marshes we saw a signal lamp winking from the base of a windmill, but as we knew not if the place was held in force by the enemy, or if the flashes were the work of a spy, or if they owed their being to one of our own signallers, we decided to make inquiries before we entered the village beyond.

Accordingly we halted on the road a little way out. We had not long to wait before a motor-car approached us. We stopped it and found it was driven by an English soldier, who told us that there was a staff officer and a dressing-station close by . . .

The C.O. turned me over to the dressing station and then hurried to report to the staff officer. From there he and his nine men joined in, I believe, with the force that stormed Messines a few hours later.



CUTTING THE KAISER'S CLAWS IN THE EAST

One of the first efforts of the Japanese in the war was directed towards securing all Germany's outposts of Empire in the East so that her commerce raiders, such as the Emden, should have no point at which they could re-victual and re-coal. The advanced German positions at Tsingtao were attacked by a Japanese force late in September. British troops to support the attack were landed at Laoshan Bay, where the transports seen below are lying. Railway lines to be used in the advance are being unloaded from lighters. The force of 5,000 Germans in the fortress was soon completely isolated and had no means of communication with the outside world but such primitive ones as the heliograph station seen right. Above, the 2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers are seen landing at Laoshan Bay on September 23, to take part in the advance. The fortress surrendered on November 7.





NEW LIGHT on the EMDEN

Signalman's Stirring Story of a Famous Sea Fight

by Lewis R. Freeman

FOR the first three months of the War, the Emden, rivalling the exploits of the old French corsairs, had wrought great damage to English merchant shipping, and a sigh of relief arose when on November 9, 1914, H.M.S. Sydney at last put an end to the predatory career of the German light cruiser. The fight is here described to an interviewer by a signalman on the Sydney who from his vantage point had an unrivalled opportunity of witnessing every phase of the action

IT may be that it is because since the outbreak of the war the British sailor has constantly been riding the crest of the wave of great events, that he is so prone to regard even the most dramatic and historic actions in which he has chanced to figure as little or nothing out of the ordinary run of his existence, as only a slightly different screening of the regular grist of the mill of his daily service.

It was this attitude which was largely responsible for the fact that, although there were upwards of the three or four score officers and men who had taken part in the sinking of the Emden still in her, I spent several days in the Sydney before I found anyone who appeared to consider that stirring action as anything other than the mustiest of ancient history. In fact, when I did get the story, it was more by luck than deliberate design that an actor in the historic drama of which I had set myself the task of learning something at first hand came to tell me of the part he had played. That he had what were perhaps more comprehensive opportunities for observation than most others was my good fortune.

It was a young signalman who told me his had been the honour of being the first man in the Sydney to sight the " strange ship " which subsequently turned out to be the long-sought-for Emden.

" IT was just the luck of my chancing to be on watch with a good pair of glasses," he said modestly, " but that was by no means the limit of my luck in connexion with the Emden show. When we went to ' Action Stations,' I was ordered to do nothing but keep an eye on the collier that had been standing-by the Emden at first, but which got away under full steam just as soon as it was plain we were going to give her beans. I carried out orders all right, as far as keeping an eye on the collier was concerned, but my other eye and my mind were on the Emden ring of the circus. I don t really suppose there was another man on the Sydney who had as little to do, and therefore as much time to see what was going on, as I did. But that wasn't the end of my luck, for I was one of the party that went ashore next morning to round up the Huns who had landed on Direction Island, and then, after that, I was in the first boat that went to begin salvage operations on the Emden.

" WE'D been rather playing at war up to the time we fought the Emden," he went on, " having spent most of the opening months purifying the Marshalls, Carolines, New Britain and New Guinea, by cleaning the Hun out of them. There had been a few skirmishes ashore, but nothing at all at sea, nor did the prospects of anything of the kind seem any better in early November than they had been right along up to then.

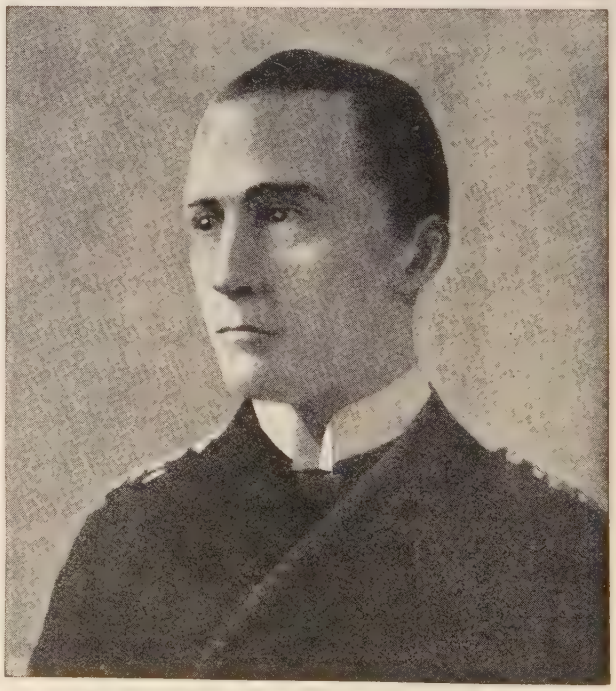
" We knew, of course, that the Emden was still in business, but we also knew that any one ship had about as much chance of finding her in the Indian Ocean as you have of finding the finger-ring you lose in the coal bunkers.

" The first and only word we had that a raider was in our vicinity was in the form of a broken message from the Cocos station, which never got further than ' Strange cruiser is at entrance of harbour——' At that point the 'strange cruiser' managed to work an effective 'jam,' and it was not long before the Cocos call ceased entirely. Although we did not learn it till the next day, this was caused by the destruction of the station by a landing party from the Emden under Lieut. Mucke.

" The convoying warships were the Sydney, her sister the Melbourne, and a Japanese cruiser, larger and with bigger guns, but slower than we. The Jap, without waiting for orders from the captain of the Melbourne, who was the senior officer of the convoy, dashed off at once, and was only recalled with difficulty.

" AS the job was one for a fast light cruiser, the choice was between the Sydney and Melbourne, and it was because the skipper of the Melbourne did not feel that he had authority to leave the convoy that the Sydney had the call. We worked up to top speed quickly and were soon tearing through the water, headed for Cocos Island, at over twenty-six knots.

" It was about seven in the morning when the broken message was picked up, and at eight I was sent aloft to relieve the look-out. It was nine-fifteen when the ragged fringe of the coconut-palms of Direction Island—the main one of the Cocos-Keeling group—began



MODERN FREEBOOTER

Captain Karl von Müller, who commanded the Emden during her remarkable career as a commerce raider, preserved the highest traditions of the sea, for he did all in his power to save the crews of the ships he captured and sank.



FLAMES LICK ROUND THE ANCIENT BELFRY OF YPRES

The beauty of the famous 13th-century Cloth Hall of Ypres had been jealously preserved by the people of the town, and when war broke out restoration had been in progress for six years, and the belfry was clad in wooden scaffolding. Then came the cruel bombardment beginning in November 1914. Shell after shell burst on the historic building. It was soon enveloped in flames, fed by the timber that was to have helped in its preservation. This remarkable photograph, like that in page 247, shows the beginning of the fire that left the Cloth Hall a blackened shell.

Photo, Antony of Ypres



LONDON SCOTS QUITTED THEMSELVES LIKE FIGHTING MEN—

The first proof of the fine fighting spirit that animated the British Territorial Infantry was given by the London Scottish at Wytschaete in the first battle of Ypres on October 31, 1914, when, as the official history of the war says, "the line that stood between the British Empire and ruin was composed of tired, haggard and unshaven men, unwashed, plastered with mud, many in little more than rags." It was to save this line that the London Scottish were thrown into the battle, and fought right gallantly, as is vividly told in Chapter 47.



Imperial War Muse

—BUT ONLY A REMNANT OF A GALLANT BATTALION REMAINED

During that memorable day the battalion suffered 345 casualties, but five of the men in the group above, according to regimental information, survived into civilian life. They are, from left to right: third, Lance-Corporal Hastwell, now a restaurateur; fourth, Pte. Hutchins, now Senior Chaplain at Bordon Camp; seventh, H. T. Egerton, now departmental manager in a bank; eighth, Kenneth Greig, who became a D.A.D.O.S. during the war and is now an insurance broker; and twelfth, A. S. Miller. This photograph was taken by a French officer just after the battle.



TOWARDS NEW STRENGTH TO FIGHT AGAIN

After enduring wounds and sickness sustained in the line, the fighting men of the British Army found life tranquil and gay during their convalescent period, even though the havoc of war lay all around them and the thunder of the guns was often close at hand. Above are shown details from different regiments passing through a French town. They have had a respite from the fighting line and are now on their way to rejoin their units and once again to take their part in the turmoil of the conflict.

to poke up over the horizon, and perhaps ten minutes later that my glasses made out the dim but quite unmistakable outline of three funnel tops.

"Although we hadn't studied silhouettes at that stage of the game to anything like as much as we've had a chance to since, that trio of smoke-stacks marked her for a Hun, and probably the Emden or Königsberg. Just which it was we never knew till after we'd put her out of action and picked up the crew of the collier that accompanied her.

THE ENEMY SURPRISED US

"The first sign of life I saw on the Emden was when she started blowing the syren. This, although we did not know it at the time, was an attempt to call back the party she had sent ashore to destroy the wireless station. Luckily for that lot, there was no time for them to come off. The Emden did not, as I have read in several accounts of the action, attempt to close immediately, but rather headed off in what appeared to be an endeavour to clear the land and make a run for it to the south'ard.

It was only when her skipper saw that the converging course we were steering was going to cut him off in that direction, that he took the bull by the horns and tried to shorten the range to one at which his four-point-ones would have the most effect.

"There is no use denying that we were taken very much by surprise when the enemy fired his ranging shot at 10,500 yards, for we had hardly expected him to open at over seven or eight thousand. Still more surprising was the accuracy of that shot, for it fell short only by about a hundred yards, and went wobbling overhead in a wild ricochet.

"His next was a broadside salvo which straddled us, and his third—about ten minutes after his 'opener'—was a hit. And a right smart hit it was, too, though its results were by no means so bad as they might have been. I had the finest kind of a chance to see everything that that first shell did to us. It began by cutting off a pair of signal halyards on the engaged side, then tore a leg off the range-taker, then sheared off the stand supporting the range-finder itself, went through the hammocks lining the inside of the upper bridge, and finally down through the canvas screen of the signal bridge, and on into the sea. If it had exploded it could hardly have failed to kill the



AFTER A VISIT FROM THE EMDEN

The results of one of the Emden's most daring exploits are seen here. At 9.30 p.m. in the darkness of the night of September 21, 1914, she appeared off Madras and startled the city by short but sharp bombardment of the Burmah Company's oil tanks which stood near the sea front, a legitimate act of war, for Captain von Müller always maintained the traditions of the sea. Two tanks containing half a million gallons of oil were set on fire and completely consumed. Other damage is illustrated in page 240. When the shore batteries opened fire on the raider she slipped away into the darkness.

captain, navigator, and gunnery lieutenant, and probably pretty well all the rest of us on both bridges.

"You may well believe, sir, that we were rather in a mess for some minutes following that smash, but I remember that the officers—and especially the captain and navigator—were as cool as ice through it all. The captain went right on walking round the compass, taking his sights and giving his orders, while the pilot was squatting on top of the conning-tower and following the Emden through his glasses, just as though she had been a race-horse. I even remember him finding time to laugh at me when I ducked as one or two of the first shells screamed over. 'No use trying to get under the screen, Seabrooke,' he said; 'that canvas won't stop 'em.'

ARMS AND LEGS WENT FLYING

"It was almost immediately after this that the after-control — located about amidships—met with even a worse disaster through being hit squarely with two or three shells from a closely bunched salvo. I had a clear view in that direction from where I stood, and I saw a lot of arms and legs mixed up in the flying wreckage, but the sight I shall never forget was a whole body turning slowly in the air, like a dummy in a kinema picture of an explosion. As the profile of the face showed sharp against the sky for an instant, I recognized it as that of a chap who had been rather a pal of mine.

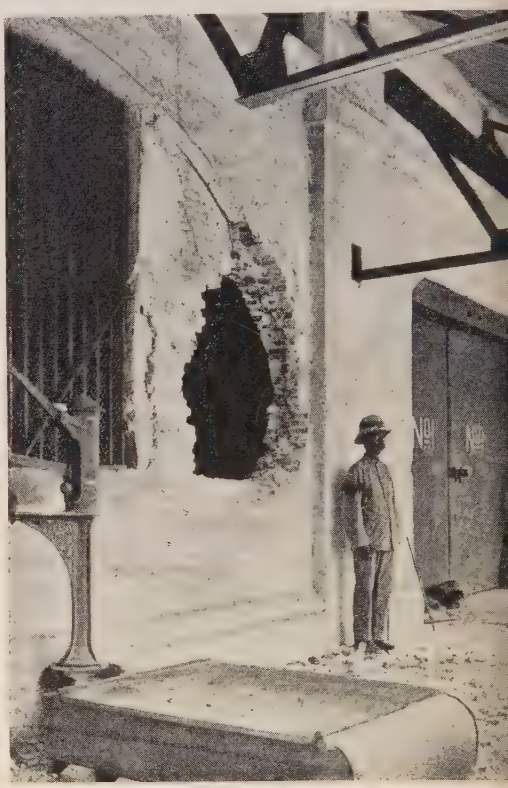
"A few minutes later, while I was edging along the deck with a stretcher-party, carrying our wounded range-taker, I saw, out of the corner of my eye, what appeared to be a very funny sight—one of the gun crew of a 'S-2,' which was not engaged at the time, dabbling his foot in a bucket of water. When I came back I saw that it was anything but funny.

GALLANT CASUALTY

"Two of the crews of starboard guns had been badly knocked about by the explosion of shells striking the deck at the end of their long high-angle flight. Among these was the chap I had seen apparently cooling his foot in a water-bucket. As a matter of fact, it was no foot at all he was dabbling, but only a maimed stump. The foot had been carried away by a shell fragment, and the brave chap, not wanting to be put on the shelf by going down to the surgeon, had—all on his own—scooped up a canvas bucket full of salt water and was soaking his stump in it in an endeavour to stop the flow of blood.

He was biting through his lip with the smart of the brine on the raw flesh as I came up, but as I turned and looked back from the ladder, leading up to the bridge, I saw him hobble painfully across the deck and climb back into his sight-setter's seat behind his gun.

"These I have mentioned were the several shots from the Emden which were responsible for our total casualties of four killed and twelve wounded. Of other hits, one took a big bite out of the mainmast, but not quite enough to bring it down. Another scooped a neat hollow out of the shield of the foremost starboard gun and bounced







SCENES IN THE EPIC STORY OF THE EMDEN

The exploits of the Emden won the admiration of the British Navy, for if she was a destructive foe she was also a chivalrous one. The two lower photographs were taken from the British steamer Katinga, which at this time had 417 passengers aboard, rescued from the ships that the Emden had sunk. Left, is the Emden with the Greek collier Pontoporos in attendance, and right is von Müller's famous raider about to sink the British merchantman, Diplomat, after her crew had been taken off. Above, right, is a hole in the wall of a Madras building caused by a stray shell during the shelling of the oil reservoirs, the result of which is shown in page 239.

off into the sea, leaving two or three of the crew who had been in close contact with the shield half paralysed for a few moments from the sharp shock.

"There is no doubt that for the first fifteen or twenty minutes of the fight the Emden had the best of it. This was probably due mainly to her luck in putting both our range-finders out of action, in what were practically her opening shots.

"It took her three ranging shots to find us, though, and once we started we did the same with her. Our first salvo fell beyond her, the next both short and wide, but two or three shells from the third found their mark. And we were no less lucky than the Emden with our first hits, for where she knocked out our gunnery control by disabling our range-finders, we did the same to her by shooting away the voice-pipes of her conning-tower, from which Captain von Müller, still obstinately resolute, directed the action.

"Just as soon as we started hitting the Emden she stopped hitting us. In fact, I don't think from then on to the end she dropped another shell aboard us.

"With the Emden's shell no longer bursting about our ears, I had a better chance to watch the effect of our fire upon her. I still have the page of memorandum on which I noted the time that a few things happened during the next hour.

HER FUNNELS GONE

"The effect of our fire upon the Emden first began to show just after ten, and at 10.4 I made a note that her fore-funnel had disappeared. At 10.30 our lyddite caused a big explosion at the foot of her mainmast, making a fire which never was entirely got under control. At 10.34 her foremast, and with it the fore-control, collapsed under a hard hit and disappeared over the far side. At 10.41 a heavy salvo struck her amidships, sending the second funnel after the first, and starting a fierce fire in the engine-room. At 11.8 the third funnel went the way of the other two, and when I looked up from writing that down I saw that the forebridge had done the disappearing act.

"Almost immediately the Emden altered course and headed straight for the beach of North Keeling Island, which she had been rapidly nearing during the last hour. The Sydney fired her last salvo at 11.15, and then, the captain seeing that the enemy was securely aground, made his decision to turn away and started in hot pursuit of the collier.



ONLY SHOT THAT WENT HOME

As the Sydney considerably outranged the Emden and had the advantage in speed, she suffered very little from the enemy fire, the only serious damage being that seen in the photograph where some of the crew are standing round the remains of one control station which was destroyed by a direct hit, all the men in it being wounded. The Sydney had only four men killed and twelve wounded.

"This collier, as we learned presently, was a former British ship, the Buresk, which had been captured by the Emden some time before and put in charge of a German prize crew. If her skipper had not felt sure that the Emden was going to do for us, he could have steamed out of sight while the engagement was on. As it was, he lingered too long, and we had little difficulty in pulling up to a range from which we could put a warning shell across the runaway's bows. That brought her up, but the Hun naval ensign was kept flying until a signal was made for it to be struck. That brought the rag down on the run, but her skipper prevented it falling into our hands by burning it.

"No sooner was our boarding officer over her side than a mob of Chinese stokers crowded about him shouting in 'pidgin' English that 'puff-puff boat gottee biggee holee. No more top-side can walkee.' Rushing below, our men found the sea-cocks open, with their spindles bent in a way to make closing impossible. As the ship was already getting a list on, there was nothing to do but take the prisoners off and let her go down a shattered and an empty hulk.

"To make sure that there was no trick about the game—that no concealed crew had been left behind to stop the leads by some prearranged contrivances and steam away with her as soon as it was dark—the Sydney pumped four shells into her at short range, and she was burning fiercely from fires started by these when the water closed over her. Then, at a somewhat more leisurely gait, we steamed back to see how it fared with the Emden.

"It was now about the middle of the afternoon, and the first thing we noticed —standing out sharp in the rays of the slanting sun—was the naval ensign flying at the still upright mainmast of the Emden.

'DO YOU SURRENDER?'

"The instant he saw this, the captain made the signal, by flag, 'Do you surrender?' To this Emden made back, by Morse flag, 'Have no signal books,' which meant, of course (if it was true), that she couldn't read our first signal. Then, using Morse flag, which they had already shown they understood, we repeated the signal, 'Do you surrender?' There was no answer to this, and again we repeated it. As there was still no answer, and as there was no sign whatever of anything in the way of a white flag being shown anywhere, the captain had no alternative but to continue the action.

"I have always been glad that I heard the captain's orders to the gunnery-



WELL DONE, AUSTRALIA'S NAVY!

No prouder crew ever stood before a camera than the crew of H.M.S. Sydney, seen in this almost forgotten photograph above just after the sinking of the Emden. The men are standing before the forward gun. Above them is the bridge where the captain was when the foremost range-finder was shot away. The pile of hammocks was used as a protection against splinters. This triumph of the Australian Navy sent a thrill of pride through the Commonwealth and relieved the British Navy of a daring and elusive foe.

lieutenant at this time, for the point is one on which the Hun survivors were even then ready to start lying.

" We were at fairly close range, and I heard Lieut. R. ask the captain upon what part of the ship he should direct his fire. The captain studied the Emden through his glass for a few moments, and then, remarking that most of the men appeared to be bunched at opposite ends of the ship, on the fo'c'sle and quarter-deck, said he thought that there would be less chance of killing anyone if the fire was directed somewhere between those two points. Then I heard him give the definite order, ' Open fire, and aim for foot of mainmast,' and that was the word that was passed on to the guns.

" The port guns fired (if I remember right) three quick salvos, and we were just turning to give the starboard ones a chance when a man was seen clambering up the solitary stick of the Emden and the word was passed ' Don't fire without further orders.' At the same time a white flag, which I later learned was a table-cloth, was displayed from the quarter-deck. A moment later the naval ensign fluttered down, and shortly I saw the smoke of new fire on the quarter-deck. I surmised rightly that they were following the example of the Buresk in burning their flag to prevent its capture, but what else was going up in that fire I did not learn until I swarmed up to that deck the next day.

WHITE FLAG BLUFF

" It was an unfortunate fact that our guns, which there had been no time to overhaul, were suffering a good deal from the strain of their hard firing during the battle. As a consequence, their shooting was by no means as accurate as at the beginning of the action, and several of the shells went wide of the point at which it was endeavoured to direct them.

" There is no doubt that they wrought havoc among the crowd on the fo'c'sle, and I don't think our prisoners were exaggerating much when they said that those three last salvos killed sixty and wounded a good many more, and also that a number of others were drowned by jumping into the surf in the panic that followed. One could feel a lot worse about it, though, if the whole thing hadn't been due to the sheer pig-headedness of their skipper in trying to bluff us into letting him keep his flag up. He has the blood of every man that was killed by those last unnecessary shots on his hands.

" Von Müller was brave, all right. There's nothing against him on that score. But it was nothing but his pride and a selfish desire to keep his face with his superiors whenever he got back to Germany, that led him to force us to fire those entirely needless shots into his ship. He thought that he would cut a better figure at his court-martial if his colours were shot down, rather than lowered in surrender.

" One thing more while I'm speaking of this incident. Von Müller deliberately bluffed about his flag. He pretended not to understand our signals just because it served his purpose not to understand them. But when our guns began to talk he had no difficulty in translating their language."

The STARK HORROR of SANCTUARY WOOD

by Corporal John Lucy

IN this grim picture of the horrors of war Corporal Lucy tells of the fighting round Sanctuary Wood on November 11, 1914, a most critical day in the history of the First Ypres battle, when the most violent attacks of the German army were resisted. Corporal (now Captain) Lucy tells also how he first encountered men of the London Territorial battalions now thrown into the tortured battle line

WE stood to in the wet shell holes and crumbling trenches under the thunder and blasting flashes of German high explosives. There is no need to describe this bombardment, except to say that it was the worst in my experience.

A few of our fellows broke under it, and one poor chap entirely lost his head and ran back out of his trench. He had not a chance in the open. The earth was vomiting all round us and he tumbled over in a few yards. Better to have kept to the trench. No trained soldier would leave that.

A corporal, a burly fellow, fell near me, with a shrapnel bullet in his head. He lay unconscious all the day, nodding his holed head as if suffering only from some slight irritation, and did not become still until evening. Earlier in the day one youngster said: "What about putting him out of his misery?" A more experienced man explained that there was no pain. The small stirrings and little moans came from a man who was then already as good as dead.

Another soldier had his belly ripped open, and sat supporting his back against the trench, while he gazed with fascinated eyes at large coils of his own guts, which he held in both hands.

This was almost the ghastliest sight I saw. Its sequel was better. The man's entrails had not been penetrated. He got safe out of the trench, was washed, tucked in, and mended well in hospital.

Maimed men passed crouching and crawling behind me, leaving trails of blood on the ground, on their way to a ditch which led back to the woods behind. Some of them were moaning too loud, unlike our old men. One young militiaman in particular came by roaring, and seeking sympathy for a broken arm from everyone he met. A lance-corporal told him for God's sake to put a sock in it, and that if he

WHEN SANCTUARY WOOD JUSTIFIED ITS NAME

It was amidst this scene of sylvan beauty that the ghastly scenes described in this chapter took place. At the moment all is peace, and the wood gives a brief sanctuary to a Yeomanry regiment, the Northumberland Hussars, who were soon to prove their prowess as fighters in another wood rent by the horrors of war, Polygon Wood. The Northumberland Hussars were the first British Yeomanry regiment to go into action in the war.



was really badly wounded he would have no breath left to howl. That stopped his hysterics.

I should say that the non-coms. of the old army had the worst time of all, trying in circumstances like these to keep inexperienced men in hand.

Some of these men could not even fire a rifle properly, and at times our hearts quailed for our safety and theirs.

The few officers we had no doubt felt all that we did, but they were free to move about, and this was a great advantage from the point of view of a junior N.C.O. pinned to his sector, to the bit of trench he was given to defend, and always under the close scrutiny of the men he was supposed to lead and encourage.

A RUNNER pushing past gave me a nasty jar: "God, are you alive?" he said crudely. "We heard you were killed, down at headquarters." "No hope!" I said, hardly daring a longer sentence lest death should finish it. The trenches were filled with the acrid smell of shell smoke. Heavy shrapnel burst right down on us, its pall of smoke roofing the trench and blotting out the sky. I was flung about by the concussion, and thrown flat against the trench bottom. My whole body sang and trembled. One ear was perforated by the concussion, and I could hardly hear. The runner came to me, and we held each other with our hands. "Are you all right?" I nodded, having no talk.

"The message I am taking is, 'Stand to,' because the enemy is massing just in front of us," he said. "Nasty spot, this." And he hurried along, two more close bursts adding to his speed.

'NOW WE'RE FOR IT'

BEFORE the shelling ceased we were ordered to man the trench: "Stand to, stand to, every one," and our rifles lined our broken parapets. The man of my section on my immediate left kept his head down. I grasped his arm and shook him savagely: "For Christ's sake, get up, you bloody fool. The Germans are coming."

He fell over sideways and on to his face when I released him, and exposed a pack covered with blood. He was dead, and my eyes came off him to my shoulder, which was spattered with his brains and tiny slivers of iridescent bone.

The soldier on my right, wincing like most of us now standing head and shoulders exposed to the fury of the shells, said desperately: "Mother of God! This is terrible."

A tall old sweat farther along shouted grimly: "Ha-ha, me bhoys! Now we're for it."

Six German army corps were marshalled in the open, advancing like a parade on the weak British Army.

The magnificent Prussian Guards made a review of it. They executed their famous goose-step in the sight of their foe, and the field-grey waves came on. The Kaiser was close behind in some neighbouring town, ready to receive reports of the great break-through.

THE PRUSSIAN GUARD

THE left of the Prussian Guard attack caught us. Farther to our left the line broke, mended, broke, and mended again. A counter-attacking English regiment went through a temporarily victorious enemy like a knife through butter, and recaptured a lost village with great dash.

We stopped the Germans on our front, and they were the finest troops of Germany, led by the flower of her noblest houses.

That was all: a weak night attack was repelled. The next morning we found a German alive at our wire. He dropped his wire-cutters and made a friendly motion with his hand, intending surrender. Our desperate fellows covered him with their rifles. I called out: "No. Save him!" A bitter voice replied: "No bloody fear. No Sergeant Benson tricks here." And the brave German was swiftly killed.

[Sergeant Benson had been killed by the Germans when attempting to rescue a wounded enemy soldier.—ED.]

WE stayed in the line for two more days, easily checking weaker attempts to drive us back, and then once more we went out to reserve. We then ceased to fight as a battalion. We were too weak. We were told off to be ready to relieve the regiments in the line at a moment's notice. A Scottish Territorial regiment with a similar duty twice went up, and twice recaptured trenches and reinstated another battalion. They were unbelievably cheerful.

One young Highlander going back a second time called out: "Give us a shout if ye want us again."

The Terriers had arrived. The supposed Saturday-night soldiers. Another regiment of them from London did great work.

We Regulars got just a bit bored at reading their recorded deeds in every newspaper we managed to scrounge.

While in reserve I was detailed one morning to escort a sick party to Hooge. On the way back I got caught in a barrage and bolted into a dug-out. It was the headquarters of a Regular regiment in reserve. The commanding officer growled: "Who's that?" I gave my name and regiment and asked permission to stay a minute until the shells stopped. "Get out of here," he ordered, and he sent me out into the shelling.

The next morning some of our men assisted in digging him and his adjutant out of the dug-out, which had been blown in on them. They were both dead.

Now, in a weak moment, I thought I would go sick myself. I had developed haemorrhoids, and they bled rather badly. A sergeant with a perforated ear like mine said he would join me and go to the field-ambulance to be dressed, hoping to be detained there. We had other minor cuts, and a good many bruises too, and the skin was inclined to go dirty. The knuckles of our forefingers [trigger fingers] were cut open from constantly firing our rifles. A calloused knuckle on a forefinger is the hallmark of the 1914 men.

ON the way we had to dodge a good many shells, and in an interval of sheltering behind a house we answered some call we could not resist, and returned, feeling ashamed, to our reserve trench. On our way we pulled a young frightened lance-corporal from shelter and made him rejoin with us. He later turned out to be the most distinguished soldier in the regiment, and he was four times decorated for valour.

On the 19th of November we were again in the line, because a battalion that had suffered worse than ours had to be given a rest; but that evening the London Territorial Regiment, fresh and strong, came to relieve us—a relief that was to take us away from that battlefield of Ypres, right back to Westoutre.

ONLY 4 OF EVERY 100 LEFT!

THIS time only forty men of my regiment were able to march away. The rest were killed or wounded.

Forty—forty left out of two hundred and fifty, and only about three weeks ago there were only forty-six left out of an entire battalion. I searched my mind for total figures, and roughly reckoned that in three months ninety-six men out of every hundred had been killed or wounded. I was too weary to appreciate my own luck. I was so completely dazed that I lingered in the front line, while a London Territorial congratulated my regiment on giving the Germans "Denbigh." He was a cultured man in the uniform of a private soldier. But "Denbigh"—I did not know the word. I do not yet know its meaning. [The Earl of Denbigh was Col.-Commandant of the H.A.C.—ED.]

The Londoner looked for praise. He liked talking to me, a Regular corporal of the line. He asked if I thought his regiment would, any day, be as good as those of the old army.

I said: "Yes. Every bit as good."

My eyes weakened, wandered, and rested on the half-hidden corpses of men and youths. Near and far they looked calm, and even handsome, in death. Their strong young bodies thickly garlanded the edge of a wood in rear, a wood called Sanctuary. A dead sentry at his post leaned back in a standing position against a blasted tree, keeping watch over them.

PROUDLY and sorrowfully I looked at them, the Macs and the O's, and the hardy Ulster boys joined together in death on a foreign field. My dead chums.

A silence more pregnant then the loudest bombardment stole over the country, the evening silence of the battlefield. A robin sat in a broken bush on the parapet and burst into song.

THE Londoner said quietly: "You'd better hurry up, Corporal. The Irish are falling in on the left."

I slung my rifle over the left shoulder. "So long, chum. Good luck!" "So long," said the Londoner, and I left him with our dead. The roll was being called when I joined our small party, but there was no zest in this roll-call.

All the men stood heavily and answered listlessly. Information about dead and wounded was murmured. Our curiosity now was not for the out-numbering dead, but for our few selves, and in a dazed way we inspected each other's faces, because every survivor was a phenomenon in himself. We exchanged half-smiles of appreciation and silent congratulation. Then we slouched off across the cold, barren, wintry fields, without talk, to join the main road at Hooge, and, arriving there, got into step once more on the hard-paved road. Hooge was wrecked. South of it the Menin Road from Ypres was stiff with French cavalry. They were drawn up in long lines on the west of the road, with their horses' heads facing inwards toward the centre of the road—massed in thousands and standing by, mounted, to check the Germans in case the British broke. They were not wanted.

The first battle for Ypres was over, and Ypres was saved.

. . . . .

As we drew nearer to the old moated town we thought it had not been worth defending, for it was already in ruins and it looked as if every house had been destroyed by shell or flame.



THE MENIN ROAD RECEIVES ITS BAPTISM OF FIRE

Here as yet hardly touched by the dire hand of war is the ground behind the Ypres-Menin Road, later to be the scene of the furious fighting and heroic deeds that have left it an outstanding memory among the many that cluster round the villages of the Salient. But the clouds of war are already showing, and the white puffs of smoke seen above the horizon are German shells bursting above the road.

Imperial War Museum.



DRAMA OF THE YPRES CLOTH HALL 1914 and 1938

ONLY the first stage in the destruction of the Cloth Hall was achieved by the Germans in 1914. Throughout the war the bombardment of it continued until, as shown in later pages in this work, the scarred and blackened walls stood only a few feet above the ground.



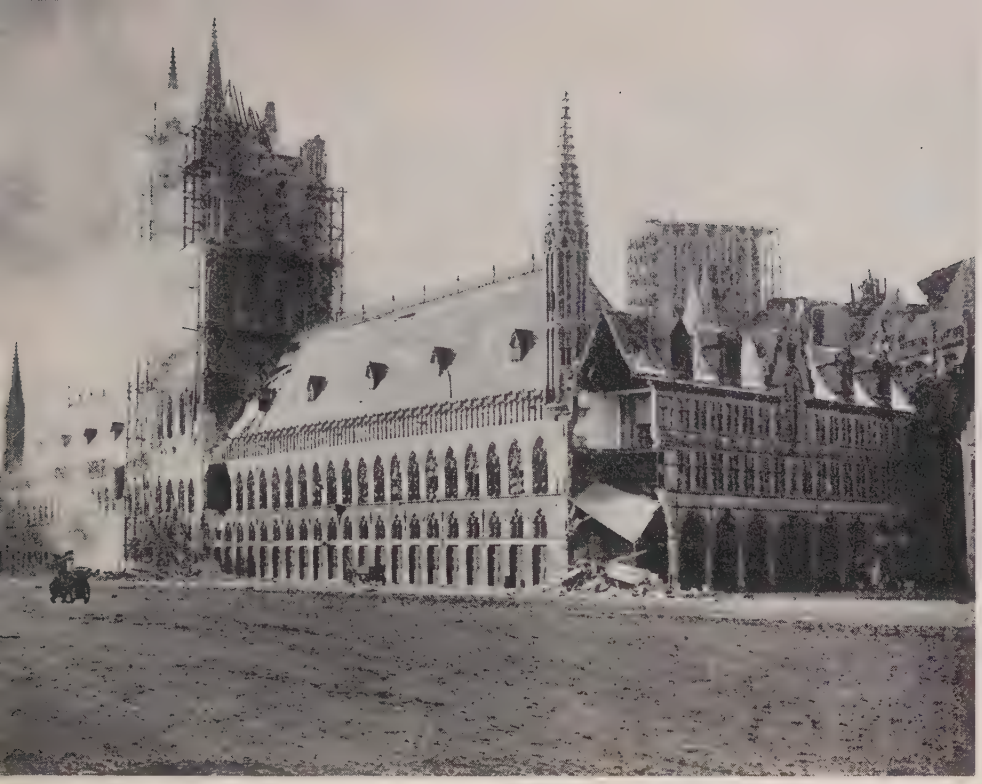
Above is a part of the interior of the Cloth Hall at Ypres as it was before the war. It is the Salle Echevinale which in the 19th century was restored in the modern Gothic style and decorated with the frescoes, seen on the left wall, of the entry of Philip the Bold of Burgundy into Ypres and other scenes in the town's history. All this was destroyed by many fierce bombardments, as bit by bit one of the architectural glories of Belgium was brought to complete ruin.

Photo, C. Pilkington, in Imperial War Museum



Above, is the interior of the Cloth Hall as it was during the German bombardment of the town in 1914. The roof is off and to the pillars among which the merchants of Ypres conducted their affairs in medieval times, British soldiers have tethered their horses. The photograph left shows the hall of the Salle Echevinale as it is today with the work of restoration complete with the exception of the end wall. We are indebted to the Clerk of the Works to the Town of Ypres, M. Albert Werrebrouck, for permission to take this photograph.

Bottom photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



ITS GLORY RISES AGAIN BUT BLACKENED RUINS REMAIN

Photos, Antony of Ypres and A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

The photograph of the Cloth Hall at Ypres above was taken but a short time after that in page 235, and shows another stage in the almost irreparable disaster, for, as photographs reproduced in later pages of this work show, the bombardments of 1915 and 1916 almost razed it to the ground. The original structure consisted of two wings on either side of the belfry, while on the east side, seen on the right of the top photograph, is the Nieuwerk built early in the 16th century, the lower part consisting of an open hall supported by columns.

Right, is the Cloth Hall as it is today, partly restored. It is a replica of the original building, but only one wing and the glorious belfry have been rebuilt. Above the motor-coaches on the right of the photograph can be seen the blackened walls of the Nieuwerk which there has been no attempt to restore, and it remains a lasting memorial to Ypres' most tragic hours. The belfry, the first part of the restoration to be completed, was inaugurated by King Leopold on July 29, 1934.







THEN CAPTAIN & COMMANDERS NOW ADMIRALS

IN the years that have elapsed since the World War death has taken a heavy toll of those who held high commands in the Navy, but the three officers in this page who still survive twenty years later won fame between 1914 and 1918 while comparatively juniors in the service.

CHATFIELD

Captain Ernle Chatfield, now Lord Chatfield, and until recently First Sea Lord, was Lord Beatty's Flag Captain in H.M.S. Lion at the battle of Jutland, and stood beside him on the bridge of the Queen Elizabeth during the surrender of the German Fleet after the Armistice. Left is Lord Chatfield as he was in 1918, and right as he is today.



EVANS

The name of Commander Evans, now Admiral Sir Edward Evans, will go down in naval history as "Evans of the Broke," on account of the remarkable feat which he performed when, in command of the destroyer Broke in 1917, he, with the destroyer Swift, met and defeated six German destroyers in the Straits of Dover. He was specially promoted captain for his services in action. Before the war he had been second in command of Captain Scott's Antarctic Expedition and was specially promoted commander. Below, left, in 1918; right, today.







NASMITH

Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith, now Admiral Sir Martin Nasmith, performed one of the most remarkable feats achieved by any submarine commander during the war while in command of submarine E.11, in 1915. He passed through the Dardanelles into the Sea of Marmora on May 19, and remained there until June 7, sinking eleven Turkish ships during that time. His heroic work was rewarded with the V.C. Top photograph as he was then; lower one as he is today.

SECTION VII

Last Days of the First Year

Nov. — Dec. 1914

THE last month of the year 1914 saw the revenge of the naval disaster of Coronel in the victory of the Falkland Islands. England was startled by the bombardment by German warships of the Hartlepools. Fighting in the neighbourhood of Ypres became for the time more desultory. ¶ We illustrate this period by Commander the Hon. Barry Bingham's eye-witness account of the defeat of the German Admiral von Spee at the Falkland Islands. ¶ A British officer who was in a responsible position at the Hartlepools tells his story of the bombardment. Lt.-Col. Strange, a famous airman, gives a most vivid account of the battlefields from the air. ¶ We are also privileged to publish a letter by the late Sir Edward Hulse describing the amazing " unofficial armistice " of Christmas Day 1914.

* 50 December 8, 1914

REVENGE! I Saw Von SPEE Meet his DOOM

by Rear-Admiral the Hon. Barry Bingham, V.C.

IT was on November 8 that Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick C. Doveton Sturdee, K.C.B., C.V.O., C.M.G., left the Admiralty, where he had been hitherto serving, and came down to Devonport in order to hoist his flag in H.M.S. Invincible.

Admiral Sturdee, temporarily appointed Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic and South Pacific, had instructions to take the Invincible and Inflexible (Captain Richard F. Phillimore, C.B., M.V.O.) under his orders and proceed southwards at the maximum economical speed. At a certain rendezvous he was to be joined by other cruisers already out in the South Atlantic waters. Finally, with this combined force he was to seek out and annihilate von Spee's squadron; and there was to be no return home until these orders had been carried out to the letter.

The first port of call was St. Vincent, the capital of the Cape Verde Islands, where we paused only to coal; thence to a secret rendezvous, Abrolhos Rocks, some thirty miles off the coast of Brazil, for a similar purpose.

At Abrolhos Rocks we were joined by the following cruisers, which placed themselves under the flag of Admiral Sturdee: Carnarvon (Captain L. Skipwith), flying flag of Rear-Admiral Stoddart; Kent (Captain J. D.



JUTLAND V.C.

Commander Barry Bingham, now Rear-Admiral Bingham, took part in the battles of Heligoland Bight, the Falkland Islands, and Jutland, and won the V.C. at the last-named battle for the gallant way in which he led the 13th Destroyer Flotilla, of which he was in command, into action.

WHENCE VON SPEE WENT OUT TO MEET HIS END

During his operations off the coast of South America Admiral von Spee made Valparaiso his base, and it was for news of his having rounded Cape Horn that Sir Doveton Sturdee anxiously waited at the Falkland Islands. Below is von Spee's squadron in the harbour of Valparaiso after the battle of Coronel. The two outer ships with four funnels are the Scharnhorst, von Spee's flagship, and the Gneisenau, her sister ship.





THE KENT'S FLAG AT THE FALKLANDS

At the battle of the Falkland Islands H.M.S. Kent flew a silken white ensign made and presented to her by the ladies of Kent. It is here being broken just before the action. The "battle and the breeze" did considerable damage to it, but it was repaired and deposited in Canterbury Cathedral on July 1, 1916.

Imperial War Museum

Allen); Cornwall (Captain W. M. Ellerton); Glasgow (Captain John Luce); Bristol (Captain B. H. Fanshawe); Otranto (Captain J. R. Seagrave).

The above ships, together with the two battle-cruisers, left the Abrolhos Rocks and steered for the Falkland Islands, the whole squadron proceeding in extended formation, with an interval of ten miles between each unit, and with the Invincible in the centre, to enable the remainder of the squadron quickly to concentrate on her. The object of this formation was to provide for the possibility of running across von Spee's squadron.

ACTING completely in the dark, Admiral Sturdee decided to make for the Falkland Islands—which, it may be explained, lie 240 miles from the coast of South America, and 300 miles N.E. of Cape Horn; and, using Port Stanley as his headquarters, to institute a series of searching operations from this point.

The first cast was to be round Cape Horn; and then there was to be a draw of the route to Valparaiso. If that failed, the Admiral had no option except to retrace his steps and try his luck the other side. If this ground, too, proved barren, it would be necessary to search farther afield.

It was at 10.30 on the morning of December 7 when the squadron steamed in and took up anchoring billets in Port William, the outer harbour of the Falklands; while the two light cruisers—for the Bristol had now been joined by a sister ship, the Glasgow—proceeded into the inner harbour, Port Stanley, also the name of the capital, which lies at the head of the harbour. The first thing to greet our eyes was the old Canopus, resting on the mud, anchored fore and aft, temporarily converted into a floating fortress; in fact, the ship had become the defender of the Falklands. This ancient battleship had been despatched at the last moment by the Admiralty to reinforce Cradock's ill-fated ships, which as a squadron the Admiral knew to be outclassed by the German China Squadron.

Realizing that the Good Hope and Monmouth were no match for the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, Cradock had earnestly petitioned the Admiralty to allot him one or more modern armoured cruisers, such as the Defence or Warrior. These two ships, however, could not at that time be spared from the Mediterranean, presumably owing to the fact that the Goeben and Breslau were still at large in Turkish waters.

Thus a request for material assistance brought nothing better than the obsolete Canopus, with a maximum speed of 16 knots; four old 12-in. guns of low calibre; obsolete 6-in. quick-firing guns, tolerably useful at a range of about 9,000 yards. Yet even this assistance—whatever it might have been worth—was denied to Cradock, because a series of defects in the engine-room caused the Canopus to remain behind at Port Stanley when he left that port at the end of October.

THE COMING OF VON SPEE

AT the first sign of dawn next morning (*i.e.* December 8), coaling began in all ships of the squadron, other than the Bristol and Glasgow, who had completed the previous evening.

The Kent took up the position of guardship outside the harbour of Port William. Two hours' work in the Invincible and Inflexible yielded some 400 tons each. Then came an interval for a well-earned breakfast. The third-cup-of-coffee-and-marmalade stage was being reached when a signalman dashed down to the ward-room and, with praiseworthy efforts to preserve his official calm, reported that one of the shore signal stations, Sapper Hill, had sighted two foreign men-of-war. In a few minutes the news was confirmed and three more ships were reported to the southward. Next they were finally identified as being the German China Squadron. In truth here was Admiral von Spee and his squadron steaming right into the jaws of the lion.

OUT of touch by wireless since he left Valparaiso, von Spee had dawdled down the coast and round the Cape to the Falklands, never dreaming for an instant that two powerful battle-cruisers had been detached with the special object of meeting him.

Amidst loud cheers the captain gave the order to "cast off colliers." Then followed the thrilling notes of the bugle call, "Action." At the same time the whole squadron was ordered to raise steam for full speed with all despatch. As guardship, the Kent had steam up, and this cruiser was directed to observe and report the enemy's movements.

When within fifteen miles of the Falklands, von Spee, who was flying his flag in the Scharnhorst, sent the Gneisenau and Nürnberg ahead to a distance of less than six miles from the harbour for the purpose of reconnoitring, while he himself, with the other ships, remained approximately eight miles off. According to the statement made subsequently by prisoners from the Gneisenau, it appears that the sub-lieutenant who had been sent

aloft with powerful glasses to ascertain what British ships were in the harbour, reported to his captain that there were two battle-cruisers and five other cruisers anchored there.

Such a statement sounded absolutely incredible to the captain, until a senior lieutenant, the gunnery officer, who was next sent up, confirmed the first report. The presence of Dreadnought cruisers was thus placed beyond all doubt, and the fact could only be explained on the assumption of their being Japanese battle-cruisers, and here is to be found the explanation of the myth industriously circulated by the English press, to the effect that Japanese ships were present at the battle of the Falkland Islands.

THREE UNWELCOME SURPRISES

In any case, the enemy had an unwelcome surprise. It was for the Gneisenau to receive the second unpleasant shock, when a report was heard and two 12-in. shells, about 9.20 a.m., dropped quite close to her, apparently from nowhere, but in reality the result of indirect fire from the Canopus, which lay obscured from seaward by an intervening hill. Controlled from a D.P.F. erected ashore, the Canopus' guns fired one more salvo of three shells. This bombardment the Germans imagined to come from a concealed land battery and thus received their third surprise.

To experience three such shocks at a comparatively early hour was something altogether too much for them. Von Spee recalled his two ships, and the whole squadron promptly took to their heels at maximum speed—probably about 21 knots—and steered in an easterly direction. They were closely shadowed by the Kent, who remained at a suitable distance and reported their movements, until the fleet had steam up and could chase their quarry.



Russell

VICTOR OF FALKLAND AND HIS BATTLE-CRUISERS

Sir Doveton Sturdee, above, was chief of the War Staff at the Admiralty when news of Sir Christopher Cradock's defeat at Coronel was received. Two battle-cruisers, the Invincible and Inflexible, were detached from the Grand Fleet and Admiral Sturdee hoisted his flag in the Invincible as "Commander-in-Chief in the South Atlantic and Pacific." Right, the Invincible and Inflexible are seen from another ship of Admiral Sturdee's squadron in actual pursuit of von Spee just before the stirring incidents described in Admiral Bingham's narrative.

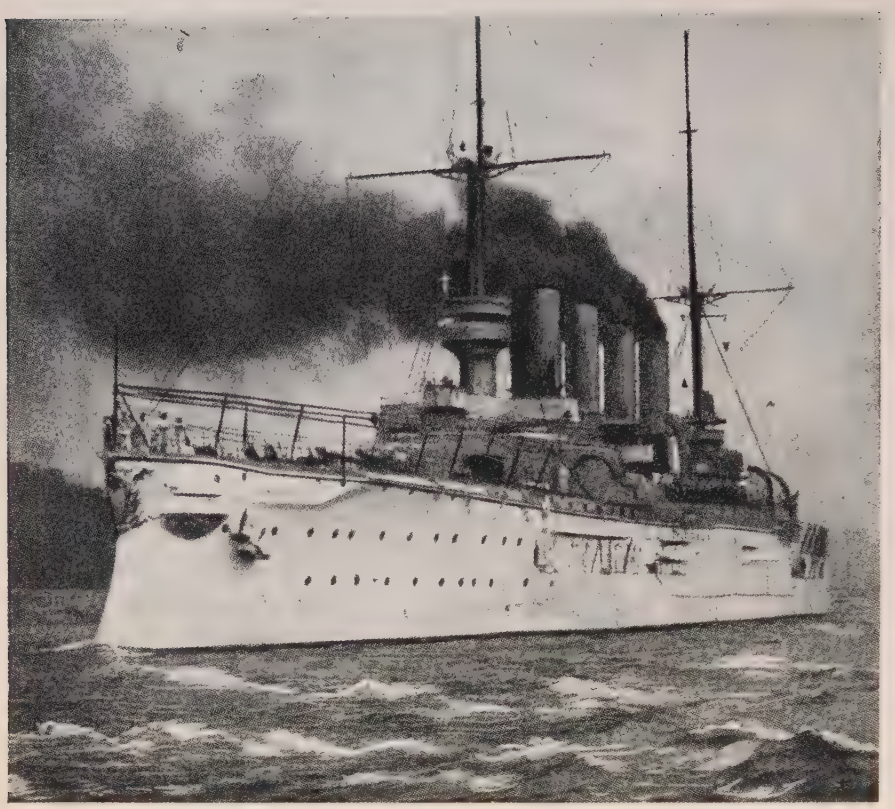
Imperial War Museum

It was 9.45 when we left harbour, on a glorious morning with a bright sun, almost dead calm and the clearest atmosphere. So great was the visibility, that on clearing the entrance of the harbour we were able at once to take the range of the enemy, the tops of whose masts and funnels were just above the horizon. The distance was found to be 38,000 yards, *i.e.* nineteen sea miles, or nearly twenty-two land miles.

With their superior speed, the two battle-cruisers rapidly forged ahead of the older ships; and then, easing down at 11.15 o'clock, waited for the others to close up. Admiral Sturdee, however, in order not to lose the advantage of fine weather conditions, cracked on once more about 12.20, working up to 25 knots or more. Fully convinced that our lighter craft could deal with them, he ignored the smaller German cruisers, and his sole determination was to force an action on the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau as soon as possible.

Soon after 1 o'clock, at a range of 17,000 yards, "A" turret (under my charge) got the order to fire a sighting shot at the Leipzig, the enemy's rear cruiser. Giving the guns their maximum elevation, I fired; and the result was short. The next round, fired at a distance of about 16,500 yards, nearly hit the Leipzig, who thereupon turned away with Nürnberg and Dresden to the S.W. These light cruisers were at once followed by Glasgow, Kent, and Cornwall. The fire of the Invincible and Inflexible was then directed on the Scharnhorst, who rapidly came into range. The effect of this was that the Scharnhorst turned eight points to port—in





SHE WAS SUNK WITH ALL HANDS

The Scharnhorst, seen above, Admiral von Spee's flagship when he scoured the South Atlantic before meeting defeat at the battle of the Falkland Islands, was an armoured cruiser of 11,420 tons and a sister ship of the Gneisenau, seen in the opposite page. When the Scharnhorst took her last headlong dive, as described in this page, not a soul of her crew could be rescued, for the Gneisenau was still demanding all the attention of Admiral Sturdee's ships.

other words, took a right-angled turn to the left. We followed suit, and thus, at 1.30, on parallel courses and at a distance of 16,000 yards, the action between the two pairs of large cruisers commenced.

WITHIN a few minutes the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, who were obviously concentrating on the Invincible, made a good start by hitting us at 1.45 with their third salvo. We then sheered off a couple of points, thereby throwing the Germans off their range, and the Inflexible followed our motions. The fire then opened rather rapidly, and the enemy at 2.10 made an attempt to get away by turning ten points to starboard. This caused a lull in the action from 2.15 until 2.45. At 2.45 we again opened fire on them ; the enemy replied at 2.55. From now until 3.15 p.m. the fighting was very fierce, the range decreasing to 10,000 yards. Both the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau were hit several times. The Scharnhorst, on fire forward, slackened her rate of fire, and accurate shooting was not maintained. Between 3.15 and 3.30 our ship was so hampered by funnel and gun smoke that Admiral Sturdee was obliged to turn his ships in a complete circle to rid himself of this nuisance. The Scharnhorst, seeing this turn, made a fresh attempt to withdraw from the action, or perhaps it was to bring her other broadside into action ; in any case, she turned ten points away from us. However, once clear of smoke, we with our superior speed drew up into gun range, and fighting recommenced with all its former vigour.

CRIPPLING A GIANT

FROM 3.30 onwards the Scharnhorst was being badly hit ; it was noticed that in many parts of the hull fires were breaking out, and that two of the four funnels were missing. With this came an encouraging message from the captain, who told me down the voice-pipe that my turret was hitting well ; personally I had observed two well-placed shots land successively just above the water-line, abreast of where the second funnel ought to have been.

At first I found it a little difficult to differentiate between the flash of the enemy's guns and one's own hits, but observation soon enlightened me on the fact that when you really strike home on a ship you see a little red glow, or in the case of lyddite a cloud of yellow smoke, suddenly appear.

Admiral Sturdee reports that, notwithstanding the punishment the Scharnhorst was receiving, her fire was steady and accurate, and the persistency of her salvos was remarkable.

At 3.50 p.m. the German flagship was looking pretty sickly ; practically motionless, fires everywhere, and only one funnel still standing.

SCHARNHORST DIVES TO THE BOTTOM

FINALLY, at 4.4 p.m., she rolled quietly over on one side, lay on her beam ends, and took a headlong dive, bows first, at 4.17 p.m.

This news I conveyed to my men in the four different chambers of the turret by means of the voice-pipe, and through the same channel could be heard the echoes of the cheering that rose from the very bowels of the ship. In a modern naval action, where all men are well down under armour, those who actually witness events do not amount to more than two score out of a complement of 990, and of a turret's crew of forty only four actually see the fight, viz., the two gun-layers, the turret trainer, and the range-taker, the remainder being distributed in the gunhouse, the working chamber, the magazine- and shell-room.

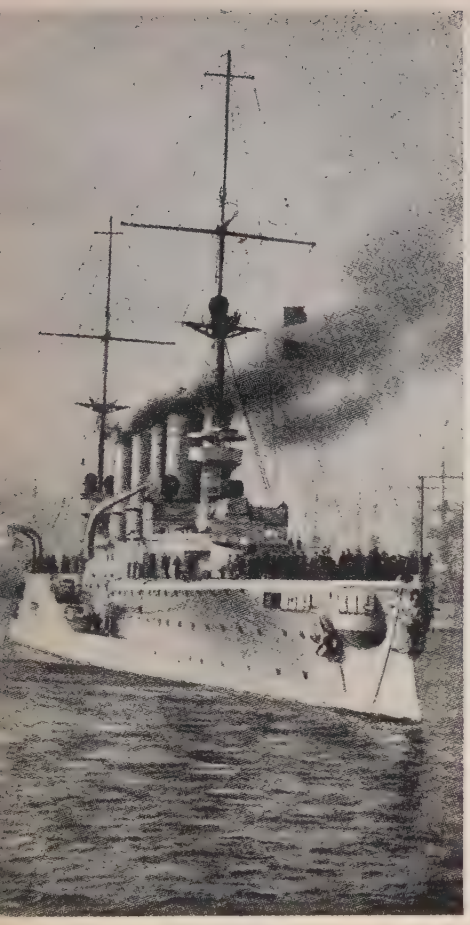
THE Gneisenau, who had been following the Scharnhorst, continued to concentrate her fire on us, leaving to their fate any possible survivors from her sister ship. Under the circumstances, any life-saving was out of the question, and not a soul from the Scharnhorst survived.

Now pitted against the Inflexible and ourselves, the solitary Gneisenau fought a losing fight for nearly two hours. Admiral Sturdee in his report says : "At 4.47 the Gneisenau was hit severely. At 5.8 p.m. she was evidently in serious straits, and her fire slackened very much. Three ships—Invincible, Inflexible, Carnarvon—were concentrating on her from different bearings. At 5.15 she hit the Invincible ; this was her last effective effort."

At 5.30 p.m. she was scarcely moving, with two funnels gone and several fires ablaze. A quarter of an hour later the Gneisenau stopped firing, having expended all ammunition, including even practice projectiles.

Almost on the stroke of 6 o'clock the Gneisenau rolled over and dived down in precisely the same way as her sister before her.

The survivors, running over the uppermost side, threw themselves into



the water, while the British ships steamed up at full speed to the spot, a few minutes ago the cradle of a proud ship, and now only marked by oil, wreckage, and masses of struggling humanity. Every available boat was lowered, and while the Invincible and Inflexible each picked up 108 and sixty-two survivors respectively, the Carnarvon—who had by now joined up—saved twenty. The survivors included the commander of the Gneisenau and about fifteen officers.

I WENT away in one of the cutters and succeeded in picking up about forty survivors, most of them in a wounded condition, and all in various stages of exhaustion; and small wonder! for the ship in her last stages must have been a very hell on earth. Anyhow, it was a gruesome business for the rescuers.

A word must now be said about the doings of the smaller cruisers, who had been left behind when the battle-cruisers made their final spurt after the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau. But as the Bristol and Otranto have already been dealt with, there remain only the Kent, Glasgow, and Cornwall.

THESE three confined themselves to chasing the enemy's three light cruisers which we left steaming to the S.W. More specifically, the Glasgow and Cornwall hunted the Leipzig, the Kent chased the Nürnberg, while with the advantages of speed and a good start, the Dresden got clear away.

Very different was the fate of the Leipzig and Nürnberg, who were both sunk with colours flying, after a stern chase and gallant resistance, which in the case of the latter ship was prolonged right up to the last moment of daylight.

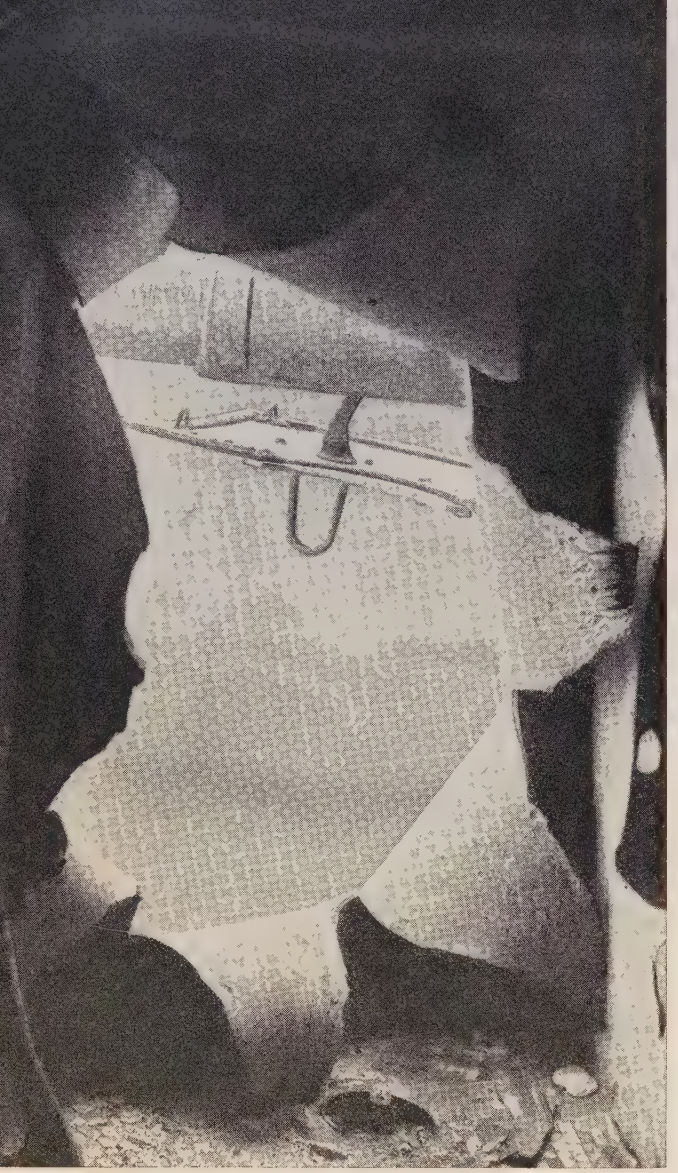
Probably the Kent had reason to be most proud of herself on account of an extraordinary feat performed by her

BEFORE HER VICTORY AND AFTER HER DEFEAT

The last port at which Admiral von Spee's squadron coaled before Coronel was Valparaiso, and, left, the Gneisenau is seen, spick and span, leaving the port. Then came the victory of November 1 over Sir Christopher Cradock's squadron, to be followed on December 8 by defeat at the Falkland Islands, when the Gneisenau went down fighting. The very dramatic photograph below, taken from the forecastle of H.M.S. Invincible, shows the scene immediately after the Gneisenau had sunk, with the Inflexible in the background. The boats of the two battle-cruisers are rescuing the crew of the enemy ship.

Imperial War Museum; photograph by Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant Duckworth, R.N.





THE KENT'S RIVEN ARMOUR

During her hot fight with the Nürnberg, H.M.S. Kent suffered surprisingly little damage. Though she was hit 38 times, only one shell pierced a casemate, as seen above. This shell ignited some cartridges, the resulting casualties numbering ten men.

Imperial War Museum

engine-room staff, who managed to get 23 knots out of a 22-knot ship that had been serving thirteen years.

THE captain's racy account, as he gave it to me a few days later, of what they did and how they did it, deserves to be quoted in full: "We sat on the safety-valves and forced the boilers fit to bust. We ran short of coal, so we burnt any spare wood left in the ship. About 6 p.m. we got within range. The Nürnberg started hitting us before we could hit her, so we went at it hammer and tongs. When it was getting dark, I closed to between two and three thousand yards. This paid me very well, because I had 6-in. guns against his 4-in., and I found the closer I was gettin' the better I was hittin'. We put her down at 7.15, almost in the dark. It was a devilish good scrap."

After this performance, it was not surprising to find his name among the list of C.B.'s.

After the battle the squadron spent a fruitless and wearisome three days in searching for the Dresden, until the rapidly depleting coal supply rendered a return to the Falklands imperative. It was December 11 when we re-entered Port Stanley.

There was now time to take general stock of damages and casualties sustained by the different ships of the squadron. The Invincible was hit no fewer than twenty-two times, but only twice below the water-line. Of these two hits, one shell penetrated beneath the armour belt and exploded in a hundred-ton coal bunker alongside the magazine of the midship turret. The extra plating, however, between the two compartments withstood the explosion, and the shell merely expended itself in the bunker, which instantly flooded. To right matters, the corresponding bunker on the other side of the ship had only to be flooded. The other shell hit us point-blank on the stem and filled the collision compartment in the bows. The remaining shells were distributed over the upper and mess decks, and most of them burst without doing anything more than superficial damage.

Our ward-room mess, which we had left a few hours ago in all the amenity of an English breakfast-room, was completely wrecked. Tables, chairs, sideboards, and piano were now powdered to matchwood, and the whole had the appearance of a hay and straw yard. In truth there was nothing left standing.

AMONG the ruins of the piano there was found—not a tuning-fork, but one of our best electro-plated set that had been blown out of its green baize nest some thirty feet away.

One of the tripods belonging to the foremast was hit and broken. Yet the mast continued to stand happily on its two remaining legs. A more convincing demonstration of the merits of their doctrine could not have been wished for by the advocates of the tripod-mast.

ANOTHER of the enemy's 8·2 shells found its way into the Admiral's "still-room," where it lay comfortably amongst his jams and refused to burst. Nicely burnished, this shell became the most valued trophy and cherished ornament of the ward-room flat.

But the amazing feature of the whole affair was that there were no casualties whatever, with the solitary exception of Commander Townsend, who received from a splinter a slight wound in his tendon Achilles and was thereby compelled to remain on the sick list for a few weeks. Such good fortune was doubtless attributable to that organization and distribution of personnel which the turret system demands.

That the Inflexible had been hit only three times seems to indicate that the Germans had bestowed the greater part of their attention upon the Invincible.

The Kent received thirty-eight hits—as was to be expected from the close range at which her action was fought—but sustained no damage in any vital spot. Nevertheless, this ship had the misfortune to lose the greater part of a gun's crew belonging to a 6-in. casemate by the bursting of one of the Nürnberg's shells, which by sheer bad luck entered the casemate through the gun-port and accounted for six lives and four wounded.

VICTORY WITHOUT PRICE

THE Cornwall was hit eighteen times, but received no casualties. The Glasgow was hit twice; she had one man killed and four wounded.

The Carnarvon received no damage: in fact, she was never hit. Though affiliated to us during the action, that cruiser had no opportunity of displaying her potential worth or of showing what she could have done if chance had pitted her against ships of the same calibre. The opportunity was also taken to effect temporary repairs of the worst shell holes in the various decks.

No words can paint the delirious joy manifested by the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands when they heard the good news. There was now once and for all an end to their worst fears and apprehensions. Nor were they lacking in giving vent to what they felt; not only in words, but in unlimited quantities of flowers and fruit. In return, we presented them with a souvenir in the shape of a piece of our shattered steel mast, burnished and mounted on oak with a suitable inscription underneath.



Sport & General

FROM FIRING LINE TO PRISON CAMP

The British soldiers shown above appear to be cheerfully resigned to their fate in having been captured and confined in a German prison camp in 1914, and several of them have turned to the solace of tobacco as they stand disarmed and no longer in the fray. But as the months and years passed and the war still raged, the lot of the prisoners grew progressively worse, with disease, want, and mind-weariness playing frightful havoc among thousands of brave men.



NO FARES COLLECTED ON THESE BUSES

A large number of omnibuses from the London streets were sent to France and Flanders in the autumn of 1914 to be used as transport for the troops. Here, on November 6, during the first battle of Ypres, a convoy of them is passing through Dickebusch towards Ypres, loaded with men of the 2nd Battalion of the Warwickshire Regiment. The bright hues which were familiar in the London streets were painted out and the glass windows replaced by sacking or boarding as they became broken. "Old Bill," the famous survivor of this remarkable fleet, is an omnibus of the type seen above.



IRON RATIONS EAGERLY SERVED — FOR THE ENEMY

The scene is in the Armentières sector on December 7, 1914, and an 18-pounder is in action behind a rough and ready camouflage of timber and brushwood. A fresh supply of shells was as welcome to the men serving the guns as it was unwelcome to the enemy, for the shell shortage had by this time begun to be felt. The artillery were then in the unhappy position of not being able to give the hard-pressed infantry all the support they might have done if the supply had been adequate. The 18-pounders needed 50 rounds per gun per day. In February 1915 they received just over five rounds per day.

Imperial War Museum



HAPPY IN THEIR LOT—AND LOOT

L.N.A.

This group is characteristic of the unquenchable sense of humour that was such an immense asset to the British Army throughout the war. The men waiting to entrain are "walking wounded" just out of the rain-sodden trenches of Flanders in the winter of 1914–15. They are mud-stained, ragged, but cheery, for the souvenirs they wear show that in the last scrap they have given a good account of themselves.

The variety of the helmets is due to the fact that the soldiers of the Fatherland were loath to discard their ornamental equipment.

BRITISH PLUCK and LUCK at the HARTLEPOOLS

Britain's First Bombardment in 250 Years

NOT since 1665, when De Ruyter raided Sheerness, had a British soldier been killed by the enemy on English soil until, on the morning of December 16, 1914, German vessels (including the Blücher) bombarded the Hartlepools, killing and wounding 420 civilians and soldiers in 43 minutes. The following account of the daring raid is by an officer then in command of the Hartlepool defences. Hartlepool was well avenged when in the following year the Blücher was sunk on the Dogger Bank

HARTLEPOOL, or rather the Hartlepools, for the new town of West Hartlepool immediately adjoins its ancient sister, possesses fine mercantile marine shipbuilding yards, and is the home port for a large fishing fleet. There are also immense marine engineering works. These were cogent reasons for arming the place, and so it had been a defended port many years previous to the Great War.

But a pretty weak armament it was: two forts, one containing two six-inch guns, the other, a hundred yards to the south, one of the same calibre. Three and a half miles farther south, across Tees Bay, lay the mouth of that river, defended by a fort containing two 4·7 guns. The steel works, dotted up its banks as far as Middlesbrough, were too far inland to attack, though the river-mouth was an important anchorage for in- and out-going vessels.

In other words, the authorities, in arming the place, never contemplated this sort of attack. But nothing in war ever happens as per book. When asked how he received his wound, a Crimean cavalry veteran replied peevishly: "I guarded 'two,' same as book said, but the bloody Rooshian cuts 'fow-er.'"

DURING the night of December 15–16, 1914, five German cruisers, Seydlitz, Moltke, Derfflinger, Von der Tann, and Blücher, all battle-cruisers except the last-named, gathered off the N.E. Yorkshire coast in two divisions. The northern consisted of the Seydlitz, Moltke, and Blücher. These must have edged in a bit closer to the shore, as they were inside our extended patrol—two destroyers and a gunboat—by dawn. Somewhere off Saltburn seems to have been the spot where the attackers hung about until they steamed off in line ahead to the attack of Hartlepool.

The other two, Derfflinger and Von der Tann, steamed south, and at about 8 a.m., 16th, fired upon Scarborough and Whitby. They do not further concern this story.

Shortly before 8 a.m., 16th, Seydlitz, Moltke, Blücher, in that order, steamed across Tees Bay from S.E. The December morning was cold, but there was not a breath of wind, the smoke going straight up from the funnels, for the hostile vessels were easing down their speed. The sea was like oil, and the tide dead low—a combination which considerably helped the defence, as will be explained later.

Pocketed in the bay was a dense mist which slowly, but never quite, dispersed. It persistently hung about Tees mouth, which locality appears to be the permanent catchpan for all fumes coming down river from the steel works. These conditions considerably hampered the style of South Gare, the 4·7 battery.

OUR tiny intercepted patrol, the destroyers Doon and Hardly, plus the gunboat Patrol, pluckily closed with the three monsters, who naturally "bashed" them unmercifully, quickly causing damage to personnel and material. It was a hopeless fight from the first, and our boats had to draw off.



Central Press

BY THEIR 'DUDS' THEY WERE KNOWN

Not all the shells that the German cruisers hurled into the Hartlepools on a December morning in 1914 brought the damage and death for which they were intended, as this photograph reveals. The projectiles which failed to explode came from guns of 11·2 and 5·9 calibre, and it was by these "duds" that the bombarding vessels were identified. For forty-three minutes the Blücher and two other battle-cruisers maintained a steady bombardment and attacked first the forts and later shipyards and other industrial centres of the towns causing heavy casualties.

It was difficult to distinguish the ensign. Both flags at a distance, especially when fouled by funnel-fumes, appeared the same. I refer, of course, to the old imperial German ensign. South Gare, in consequence, hearing the firing and seeing what they thought to be three English cruisers attacked by German destroyers, for the Germans were only using their seaward, or starboard armaments swarmed on to the parapet and took what they thought were front stalls for a most interesting fight. Only when they saw later these same ships firing on the Hartlepool forts did they realize the mistake. By that time South Gare was out of range.

Out of the mist, and almost head-on at a range of only 4,000 yards, came the leading ship. Identification is difficult under such conditions. In a few seconds the position was clarified. A large red light suddenly showed from the foremast of the Seydlitz, and the Germans opened immediately with some ranging rounds. The ships between them had twenty 11·2 guns, eight 8·2, eighteen 5·9, besides a host of lesser armament available for "port-side" fire.

To reply, we had three 6-inch, two at Heugh and one at Lighthouse. All three German ships ranged quickly; the forts even more speedily. The two guns in Heugh engaged the leading ship, while Lighthouse took on Blücher, the last ship in the line, and the only one in the arc of fire from this battery.

The third round from the Lighthouse was a "juicer." An immense sheet of flame shot up from the Blücher's after-deck. The deck supply for one 5·9 had been detonated by our lyddite shell, and the effect passed on to the next gun, whose ammunition did ditto. Half the after-bridge was brought down, and eleven seamen killed.

I mentioned the fact of it being low water. Both Heugh and Lighthouse are very low-sited batteries. The range was short, the mean range during the in-fighting being only 5,300 yards; consequently the trajectories of the hostile guns, designed for fighting at 20,000 yards, were, at this distance, absolutely rigid, *i.e.* straight lines—the smallest error in laying was a miss. Each 6-inch gun had to be hit to damage it, and each presents a relatively small target even at short range. Clods of earth and chunks of masonry there were in plenty, but the guns remained intact, though the three had several hair-breadth escapes.

FORTS ESCAPE BUT PEOPLE DIE

To render things more difficult for the Germans, Colonel Robson, the Fire Commander, had a few days previously run a camouflage extension along the rear fort wall of Heugh. It gave a jagged skyline from the sea—an appearance of false height. This and low water gave a most exaggerated height to the battery, and the enemy projectiles hummed over—only just over—the work, to burst in the houses behind.

Naturally, the enemy then shortened the range; his shell burst just in front of the guns. Here the defences scored heavily, for he used delay armour-piercing projectiles, which struck to bounce and burst far over in the air. The pieces, however, killed and wounded many inhabitants, who were now in the streets and getting a move on for the country.

A pilot cutter, becalmed half-way between the combatants, was in a somewhat unique position. The Germans left her alone. Her captain could actually see some of our six-inch projectiles whirring away after they had failed to penetrate the tough armour of the battle-cruisers. When the range was adjusted to hit the upper works, considerable damage was seen on funnels, etc.

Voice: "Go o-n-n-n! Shove 'em through! Shove 'em through! Give the b——s hell!"

Another Voice: "Mr. X.! Do stop dancing about, and save your breath for your gun corrections!"

. . . . .

The worst thing of all was seeing each ship momentarily lit up by a nasty yellow glare, that seemed to trickle along her side, and having to wait for the result. It was only a matter of a few seconds at that range. Each salvo as it arrived was preceded by an appalling "onde-de-choc," that curious double report which occurs when you are stationed in line with a high velocity gun at short or medium range. The shells were so low that the wind of each salvo knocked down any men that happened to be on the manning parade, and caps were snatched off heads and whirled away like leaves.



B.N.A

AUDACIOUS ATTACKER OF ENGLAND'S COAST

Out of the mist that hung above the sea and shore on the morning of December 16, 1914, emerged the bulky shapes of three great warships. Watchers speculated on their nationality. Then came the whine and crash of shells, and the Durham towns, the Hartlepools, awoke to the horror and shock of a German bombardment. Among the trio of enemy craft that carried out this surprise attack was the battle-cruiser Moltke, shown above. The Blücher, third of the cruisers that attacked the Hartlepools, was sunk at the Dogger Bank battle six weeks later (*see* page 292).





WAR'S TRAIL SPREADS TO ENGLAND'S SHORES

Quick as the flash of the cruisers' guns that sped the screaming shells came tragedy and chaos to many homes in Hartlepool on December 16, 1914. Here are some pictures taken shortly after the German raid. The two photographs above show some humble dwellings that were struck and wrecked—direct hits. The chapel shown on the left, below, was one of the numerous buildings that suffered, and the interior view shown on the right, below, provides a clear idea of what happened when a high-explosive shell did its devastating work.

Photos, L.N.A. and 'Daily Mirror'





Behind the Lighthouse Battery, marching on his post in the approved Buckingham Palace style, was a sentry in the 18th Battalion Durham Light Infantry ("Pals" Battalion). Backwards and forwards, one-two-three-four-about, he went through the whole of the action.

His officer asked him why the hell he had not gone under cover. His reply was classic, that of a Durham pit-man: "E-ee, booger! I was that there feart 'ad I done nowt I'd ha' roon aw-a-ay!" The little fellow's beat, I may add, was fully exposed. The opening salvo had bashed up the row of houses in front of which he had to pass continually.

. . . . . .

Our total casualties among the two forts were extraordinarily light—thanks to the enemy's delay-action projectiles; direct-action fuses would have wiped everything and everybody out, as naturally by now the range had been found exactly, and the Germans had been for some time at "fire for effect."

Four gunners, one sapper and eight infantrymen were killed, and between twenty and thirty of the garrison wounded—these mostly in reserve at billets. Four infantrymen, comprising a beach machine-gun nest just outside the entrance to Heugh, were "done in" by the first salvo. Two gunners—relief detachment men—rushing out to render possible assistance, were killed by the next.

Seydlitz and Moltke now moved north to swing round and rake the Hartlepools. This ends the second phase of the opening fire from the Germans which commenced at 8.5 a.m., the concentration ceasing at 8.20 a.m. In spite of the close range, no material damage had been done to the defence, except that the scarps and parapets of each fort were a mass of ruined masonry.

HAD it been a clear morning, with an enemy at, say, 18,000 yards—their normal fighting range and hopelessly beyond that of our guns—it might have been a very different story. British weather and the forces of Nature were, for once, on our side. . . . Had the tide been the other way—Spring high—so that the ships could judge their "overs" relative to some background, they would not have had to waste so much ammunition.

The calm state of the sea made perfect shooting conditions for us, as did the complete lack of wind. It was no virtue that we hit and hit at that absurd range, but the shell-power against that type of armour was hopeless. It was most surprising the damage we did do.

. . . . . .

THE two battle-cruisers now left the Blücher to engage the two forts with harassing fire. This ship, either by lucky chance or design, had, towards the end of the concentration, taken station so that she was directly in line with the Lighthouse itself, thereby causing the single gun of the Lighthouse Battery to go out of action for something like twenty minutes.

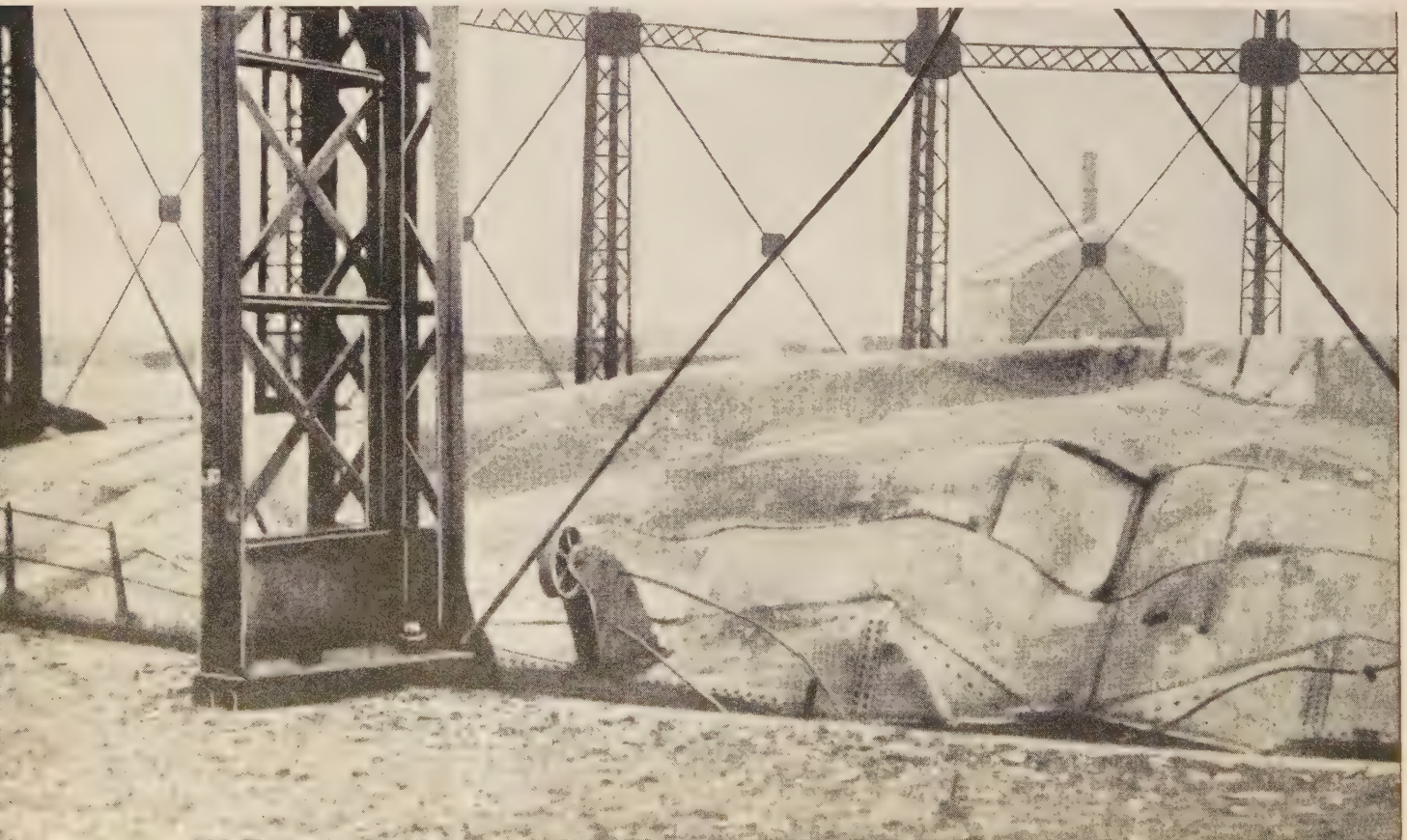
With one gun short, Colonel Robson could only follow the leading ship Seydlitz with the two pieces in Heugh until she passed out of that fort's arc of fire, then he switched to the Moltke. When she, likewise, had disappeared he swung on to the Blücher. It was hard luck Lighthouse Battery never had a chance of switching on to the other ships after she had been blanketed, but they had, thoughout the action, always been just out of its extreme left arc, so that her one and only target had to be the Blücher the whole time.

Directly Heugh engaged the Blücher she began to move out to sea. She cleared the Lighthouse, and that battery came into action, immediately engaging her again. A dense white cloud

EASY GERMAN TARGET AT HARTLEPOOL

Working to a careful plan, the Germans raked the two Hartlepool boroughs so that scarcely an area escaped the enemy's fire. One of the first and easy targets to be struck was a group of huge gasholders. There came the crash of shells and in quick succession giant columns of flame arose as the gas ignited. A moment, and the holders lay in ruins, the steel plates warped and crumpled as is shown below.

'Daily Mirror'



issued from near one of her funnels, and it was thought by some a steam-pipe had been cut, by others that " the black squad " (stokers) had been raising a good head of steam for the run home, and that it was only the safety-valves lifting.

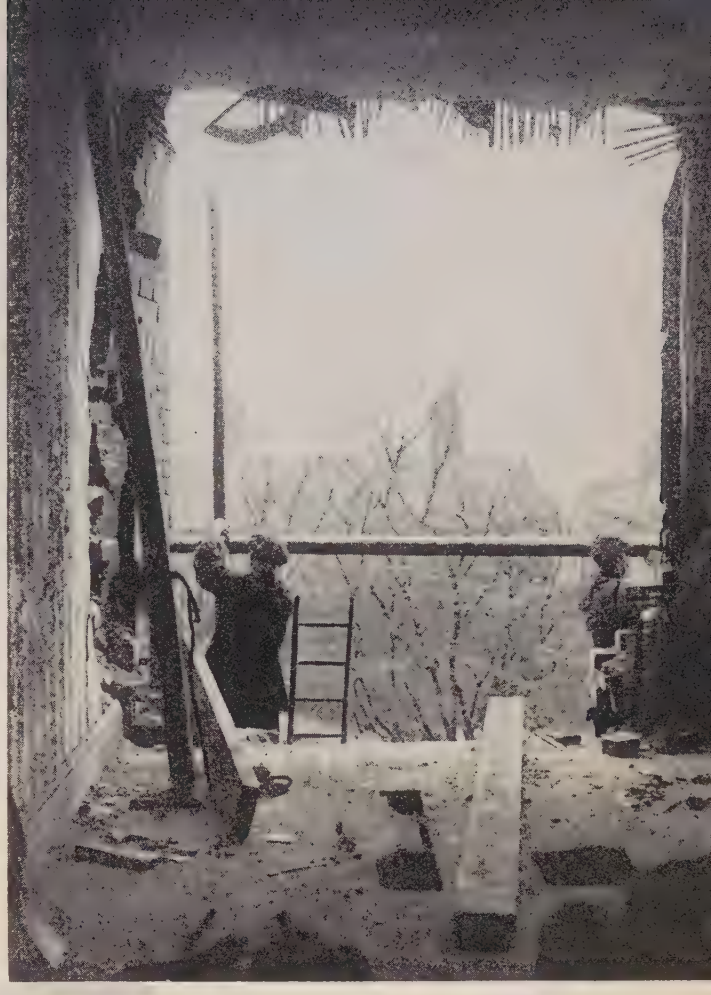
BEFORE being engaged by Heugh, the Blücher, in order to blind that fort from firing on the other two ships, had been firing salvos of old pattern powder-filled 8-in. projectiles at the rocky foreshore just beneath the battery. Owing to the absence of any wind a quite efficient smoke-screen was put up—the first of its kind! It cut down the rate of fire tremendously, but our gunners, availing themselves of every opening in the screen, still continued to fire on the Seydlitz and Moltke, until these, as mentioned above, drew out of the arc of fire and so enabled attention to be drawn on the harassing ship.

The work of destruction now began upon the two boroughs. A group of enormous gasholders were the first to go, colloquially described as " picked off as clean as a whistle." Each became a roaring column of flame.

No area seemed to have been untouched. It was as if a gigantic rake had been drawn across each spot, a gigantic " search and sweep." Shipyards, marine engineering works, railway stations, churches, schools and streets, even the private houses of heads of businesses on the low ridge above West Hartlepool, received shells of various calibre. A total of 119 killed and 300 wounded, both sexes, 600 houses destroyed or damaged, the result.

The Germans claim the silencing of an old battery known as " Cemetery " by either Seydlitz or Moltke. As this work had been dismantled in 1906, they merely wasted their salvos. Another useful lesson in the use of dummy positions.

As soon as the Blücher was well under way the other two vessels ceased fire on the Hartlepools and steamed off, converging on her. As they once more crossed the arcs of the batteries, they gave Heugh and Lighthouse a few parting salvos. These were replied to, and as the last ship disappeared in the mist our final round was fired at a range of about 9,300 yards, the batteries continuing to pepper their opponents up to the last possible moment.





L.N.A. **RUINS THAT COST THE GERMANS DEAR**

In addition to the Hartlepools, the East coast resorts of Whitby and Scarborough were shelled during the German naval raid of 1914. From 8.5 to 8.25 a.m. on December 16th, the latter town endured a steady bombardment by the battle-cruisers Derfflinger and Von der Tann, and many buildings suffered the fate of the house shown in the upper photograph. In the attack on Whitby about thirty shells were used and among the buildings hit were the ancient abbey ruins shown above. The German action in carrying out this coastal raid aroused the most bitter feelings among the civil population and fanned still further the flames of war-hate.

THE whole action lasted forty-three minutes, *i.e.* from the first opening round at 8.5 a.m. till cease fire at 8.48 a.m. The Germans had evidently worked to a carefully timed programme —15 minutes' concentrated fire on the forts plus half an hour's destructive fire on the yards, etc., combined with harassing fire on the forts.

The Blücher had to refit in Kiel after this action. The Germans admitted the eleven killed aboard the Blücher. In the whole squadron there were 80 killed and 200 wounded. This came through later from Dutch sources, and ex-service German seamen, who even now occasionally—on lawful occasions—visit the port as members of mercantile crews, and who were aboard the cruisers that memorable morning, all testify that their casualties were comparatively high.



KITCHENER'S CALL AND KITCHENER'S MEN

The desperate need that Britain experienced for the immediate expansion of her small standing army in 1914 compelled the authorities to make widespread appeals to her men to join up. Recruiting meetings became frequent in London and elsewhere, and in answer Britain's youth swarmed to the colours. The photograph on the left was taken in Trafalgar Square during a meeting of the kind. Against a background of posters and flags, the speaker is making his appeal, inviting his hearers to put on one of the uniforms displayed on the chairs instead of civilian attire.

Earl Kitchener called for 500,000 recruits for his New Army, a force that won undying fame in after years. Below is seen King George V with Earl Kitchener at Aldershot, inspecting recruits, still in civilian clothes. A brief training period, and these men were in the thick of the fighting, from which, alas, many were not destined to return.

Photos: left, L.N.A.; below, Sport & General





Photos, Central Press and Topical

ON THE HOME FRONT
THEY SERVED AND WAITED

A fervent sense of duty swept over the British people as the first months of the war passed by, and while the men, usually with no knowledge or experience of soldiering, offered themselves for service, the women, too, strove to help in the national effort. These three photographs vividly recall those strenuous days of 1914. Above, women making bandages for the troops, below, a youth and man undergoing medical examination prior to enlistment; right, anxious women, who are seeking news of the fate of their menfolk serving in France eagerly scanning the casualty lists.





I FOUGHT at YPRES from the SKY

Story of the First Ground Strafing

by Lt.-Col. L. A. Strange, D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C.

WHILE the infantry were fighting heartbreaking battles on sodden fields the pioneer airmen of the Royal Flying Corps were seeking high adventure in the clouds. The personal story of Colonel Strange who saw the first battle of Ypres from the air, and who, using unfamiliar weapons, ventured forth to seek combat with a courageous enemy, is one of the epic narratives of the Great War. Colonel Strange was one of the first airmen to employ a Lewis gun from the air against troops on the ground

WHEN I was high up in the late evening, with a sun that still gave a little warmth and burnished the machine with red and golden lights, it was a curious spectacle to look down on the grey, misty dusk stealing over the countryside and then see it lit up with flashes from the guns on either side that fired one—two—three—four in their battery groups. Shell flashes came in the same order in groups or arrived all together in continuous succession on some benighted spot that had given itself away as a target too good to be missed. Then there was the glare from corn ricks, farm buildings, and whole villages, which burnt fiercely, while the smoke of the battle drifted lazily away to the north-east.

This was my aerial impression of the fighting that took place when Rawlinson's Fourth Corps and the heroic remnants of the Belgian Army retreated by day and night until at last they came to rest on the left wing of the British Expeditionary Force, which was located somewhere between Ypres and the sea. Meanwhile the centre and right were hotly engaged round about Bailleul and later at Armentières, and on a line past Loos and down towards the mining area of Béthune. Very soon the general lines of trenches were formed which were to last for the rest of the war and put an end to any form of strategic manoeuvre on a large scale for a very long time.

AS I felt that my eighty miles per hour gave me the speed of most German machines, I decided that my Avro could easily manage a Lewis gun, provided that she was not required to climb to greater heights than 7,000 feet. Having duly obtained permission from my commanding officer, I affixed the gun satisfactorily to my Avro No. 383, with the help of Capt. Penn-Gaskell.

The mounting consisted of a metal tube, which I carefully selected from the tail boom of a wrecked Henri Farman. The gun lay on the top of the fuselage decking, while a piece of rope, lashed around its centre of balance, was passed up over the metal tube and fixed to the cross member of the front seat tank bearer, for it must be remembered that in those days the front seat was on top of the petrol tank. A pulley on the rope enabled the observer to sling the gun up into mid-air and fire it all round as well as back over the pilot's head, with the aid of a stock from the shoulder.

SUCCESSFUL FIRST TIME

IT cost us some trouble to get the gun mounted; when the job was finished, of course the weather broke, with the result that we had to fight our way day after day through clouds and rain and soon began to realize how much our work was likely to be handicapped by the prevailing westerly winds. Under these conditions there was little chance of our finding a German machine on which to try our gun.

After moving up to an advanced landing ground at Hazebrouck, No. 5 Squadron settled down at Bailleul aerodrome on October 21, from which I one day managed to get near an Albatross when I was up with Lieut. Abercrombie as passenger. Unfortunately the gun jammed after a few rounds, and those who knew the two men out there (how many of them are left, I wonder !) can easily imagine the lecture delivered to Abercrombie by Penn-Gaskell, who was our Lewis gun expert. So on Abercrombie's advice I took Penn-Gaskell up to use " his bally old gun himself " the very next day.

There being no Huns about, Penn-Gaskell assumed command. He turned and yelled himself hoarse in his efforts to make me understand I was only the driver of the Lewis gun's carriage—*i.e.* the Avro—while he was the battery commander, and as such he intended to bring the gun into action against a train and troops down below at Perenchies siding. As he was senior to me, I had to obey orders and go down, with the result that we did quite a nice little bit of what was probably the first " ground-strafing."



FIRST FOKKER

In 1914, aircraft carried no substantial armament, but it became clear to such pilots as the author of this story that the machine-gun was the logical weapon in the air. When the Fokker monoplane of the type shown above was so equipped in 1915 a new and formidable power was given to this German machine.

Imperial War Museum

This was an easy game at the time, because there was no danger of interference from above. I cannot understand why it was not done more extensively, as it was our only way of helping the hard-pressed troops who were then fighting the first battle of Ypres. Later on, it was not so popular when German machines became more aggressive ; consequently it died out and was reintroduced later as a supposed innovation. But for a while we had a monopoly of it.

THE Lewis gun we carried made my observer's seat a popular one in the squadron. On October 30, when Lieut. Thompson was my observer, we were within an inch of forcing a German machine to land, but at the critical moment an inlet valve broke, and we had great difficulty in getting home again. Another time, while I was out with Lieut. Rabagliati, we were diving on a German machine when we saw a kite balloon on the ground and shot it up. I also remember an occasion when Capt. Cartwright and I hung about over



a German aerodrome at Thielt for nearly an hour in the hope of seeing a machine come up. At length we grew tired of waiting and dived down to see what damage we could do to the aerodrome. We got peppered so badly that we returned home with twenty-three bullet holes in our machine. The seat tank was shot through, and Cartwright had a bullet hole in his coat, but I think we were lucky to get off without further damage.

EARLY SKY FIGHTING

This little excursion gave Avro No. 568 her sixtieth bullet hole. I thought she had received quite her fair share of punctures, but, of course, being unable to read the future, I had no knowledge of a certain day ahead when she was to stagger home with her pilot and observer slightly wounded and more than sixty holes put in her in one flight.

I venture to think that the extracts from my diary . . . may be interesting, as giving some notion of what happened when we met enemy aircraft in those early days, and showing how the westerly winds helped the Germans to slip back over their lines when pursued by the British.

"*November* 1.—7 a.m., repaired engine and flew to Bailleul, twenty-five minutes. 10 a.m., chased a German machine for forty minutes and fired fifty rounds from a Maxim, but he went down over his own lines, apparently undamaged. 11.30 a.m., started flight of thirty-five minutes duration, dropped twenty-five bombs on bivouac round Q—— and Lille and eighteen on a kite balloon, which went down although we did not actually hit it. 2 p.m., reconnaissance round Ypres, Roulers, Courtrai, Menin, and back to Bailleul. Dropped eleven bombs on bivouacs: this makes a record of thirty-six in one day. Also I made a record of my longest time in the air for a day—five hours and fifteen minutes altogether. Lieut. Vaughan wounded.

"*November* 2.—8 a.m., reconnaissance as passenger in Lieut. Creed's machine, observing for one hour ten minutes round Quesnoy, Messines, etc. 12 noon, up again, observing over battle in process between Ypres and Armentières. This line is now an extraordinary sight, as the trenches are very close to one another and the ground all round them is pitted with shell-holes.



AEROPLANES WERE THEN STILL NOVELTIES

To the infantry and men of all other ground forces, aeroplanes in the early days of the conflict often provided great diversion as they soared overhead on reconnaissance flights. Here is shown a party of British troops looking skyward at a biplane of the Maurice Farman pusher type. This aeroplane, which was of but 70–80 h.p., is shown close-up in the upper photograph. It was used extensively by both the British and French flying services, first for artillery observation and bombing work and later in training squadrons for the instruction of new pilots.

Photos, L.N.A. and Imperial War Museum



'ARCHIE' BARKS IN VAIN

Before aerial combat between individual aeroplanes developed to give war-flying its ferocious and deadly character, enemy airmen had to cope only with anti-aircraft fire. As is narrated in the accompanying story, the Germans were particularly active with this arm, nicknamed "Archie" by the British fighting men. Here shrapnel bursts are seen in the sky in 1915 when a German aeroplane was dodging anti-aircraft fire near Ypres.

Imperial War Museum

"*November* 3.—9 a.m., chased a German machine for twenty minutes. 11.40 a.m., reconnaissance round Béthune and Lille, drove a German machine down at L——, dropped twenty-two bombs on ammunition columns at Renardes in course of a one hour forty-five minutes' flight.

"*November* 4.—Dull, misty day. Due attention paid to machine.

"*November* 5.—10 a.m., reconnaissance with Lieut. Wilson round Messines for one hour thirty-five minutes' flight. 2 p.m., flew for one hour fifty-five minutes after German machine and drove it down at Lille, where I dropped nine bombs on the aerodrome. Fired fifty rounds from a Maxim at a balloon, dropped five bombs at Doulemont and got a very close burst from anti-aircraft guns.

"*November* 6.—Thick mist all day; no flying.

"*November* 7.—Thick mist early, but 12 noon reconnaissance round Lille, Q.M., and Ypres. In the course of a two hours five minutes' flight dropped ten bombs on cavalry bivouac. The shooting of the German Archies seems to improve daily, and we got some very close ones.

"*November* 8.—12.15 p.m., long reconnaissance from Bailleul to La Bassée, Roulers, Thourout, Courtrai, Roubaix, and Armentières, with Capt. Cartwright. . . . The district comprising Courtrai, Roubaix, Quesnoy, and Menin, seems very full of troops, especially cavalry. The latter's camps show up more clearly on account of the rings the horses make when they are exercised. I find it pays to do a sharp left- or right-hand banked turn when under shell fire, as you gain a few clear minutes before the gunners get on to you again, and every minute counts when it is a question of getting out of range of a particular gun. The Germans seem to get more and more anti-aircraft guns; the more you get used to being shelled, the more they shell you. I think I must have seen a good two or three thousand shells burst at our machines in the air today, and reckon that at least fifty of them were fired at me.

"*November* 10.—Raining; misty day. Clouds too low; no flying. Heard that the Germans attacked Ypres but were repulsed.

"*November* 11.—Cloudy, wet day."

POUNCING ON AN ENEMY 'PLANE

ON November 22 I started a reconnaissance one morning at 7.30 a.m., with Lieutenant Small as my observer, and after we had dropped some fifteen bombs on promising targets round Lille, Quesnoy, Aubers, and other places, we climbed to 7,500 feet over Armentières, as we thought we had spotted a German machine heading from the east towards Bailleul. As it approached at full throttle we made it out to be a brand-new Aviatik. It was flying at 7,000 feet, and there was a strong east wind blowing, which meant that he would find great difficulty in getting home if we pounced on him at the right moment. Altogether things looked very rosy, provided that the Lewis gun did its bit.

I turned in front of the Aviatik and about 200 feet above it, signalling to Small to hold his fire until I was ready. As we waited a little while before attacking, so as to get farther in front of our quarry, it so happened that we were bang over our own aerodrome when the right moment came. The stage could not have been better set.

I TURNED half left, kept my eye on the Aviatik, and dived across his front just as hard as I could drive my old Avro. When I was in position I nodded to Small, who replied with a good long burst from the Lewis gun. All my faculties were alert; by keeping my eyes fixed on the Aviatik's left top aileron I managed to maintain my position and correct distance. After a second burst I came up closer, being then about fifty feet below the enemy; but the German pilot must have gone into a slight turn without banking, for I suddenly saw his observer lean out and

fire a clip of cartridges from his Loeber pistol. Then the Aviatik slipped across, and a few moments later that observer was potting at me from the other side.

SMALL was changing a drum at the time. I saw a look of surprise and pain come over his face and then noticed that his glove was covered with blood. All the same, Freddy Small worked feverishly at his drum, and was ready to open fire again as soon as I had manoeuvred the Avro into position. He had shot away about half another drum when suddenly the Aviatik pulled up, stalled, and side-slipped away at a vertical angle.

I was desperately afraid he was going to escape me, but I dived ahead, and both machines went down at a terrific speed. The Hun observer was firing off Verey lights all the time he dropped, and as his own trenches and ours were not far off, I had to hustle ahead of him to cut him off from his own lines.

I just managed to head him off, but he doubled back to the left, and for a moment I thought he was bound to crash in some reserve trenches. We were down to 500 feet at the time, but only a mile from the front line. I dived ahead again, but the Aviatik flattened out to land, and I cursed fiercely when I thought that I had lost him. A stream of black exhaust came out from his Mercedes engine, and it looked as if he was just going to streak over the trenches a few feet above the ground, but with a last effort I shot in front of him again.

Down went the Aviatik's nose; it flattened out over a hedge and made a bumpy landing in a ploughed field just behind a wood where the Cornwalls and Devons occupied some reserve trenches. I knew they would do their share of the business, and as it was too close to the firing line for me to land and I had a wounded observer to get home, I headed full speed for Bailleul. My last view of the Aviatik showed me its observer standing over the pilot, whom I judged to have been wounded, while our troops were running towards the pair of them.

CLAIMING OUR CAPTIVE

As soon as I had seen Small in the right hands, I dashed off on a motorcycle to see what had happened to the Aviatik. When I arrived at the scene of its capture I found it undamaged except for some twenty bullet holes, two of which were in the instrument board. Having rescued some instruments and arms which the Cornwalls had removed from the machine, I listened to the tale of the landing.

The observer, who was a Prussian Guard officer, could not understand why his pilot, an N.C.O., had landed where he did, because the engine was good enough to take the machine over the last hedge. They would have had a good chance of escape if they had made just the extra bit before landing, and the officer thought his pilot must have come down because he was wounded.

When he found him uninjured, his rage knew no bounds; he broke away from his captors, knocked the pilot down, and kicked him unmercifully. At last he was overpowered, whereupon he begged the officer in charge of the Cornwalls' detachment who captured him to be allowed to report the matter to the German Flying Headquarters. I am afraid this request was not granted, and, after all, the pilot had received quite enough punishment for his lack of pluck.

The men in the German trenches had seen the fight in the air, and as soon as they realized their machine was captured they must have sent back word to their artillery, for they shelled us heavily when we tried to get the Aviatik back. We managed to bring it along somehow, and that evening we had a grand party in the mess to celebrate its capture. It was subsequently patched up and flown by our fellows on sundry unlawful occasions before being sent off across the Channel.

HIS FLIGHT WAS FINISHED

The tattered and crumpled wreckage of a fallen aircraft as seen in this photograph became an all-too-common sight in France as the racking years of the war dragged by. This machine, a British B.E., crashed to earth after being hit by German shell-fire during the battle of Neuve Chapelle. Pilot and observer were instantly killed.

Imperial War Museum





A CORPORAL GETS THE PRINCESS'S GIFT

Hundreds of British soldiers received a gift from H.R.H. Princess Mary's Gift Fund at Christmastide in 1914, and the corporal in the picture below has opened his parcel, a box containing cigarettes and tobacco, with obvious satisfaction. Throughout the war the folks at home sent to their kinsmen at the front parcels of many kinds, presents of food and clothing devised to ease in some small way the ordeal of life in the firing line.



ROYAL GREETINGS, CHRISTMAS, 1914

When the closing days of December came in 1914, the British Expeditionary Force had already experienced cruel hardship in the fields of France. Nevertheless, when occasion and fortune allowed, the cheery spirit of the fighting men was abundantly revealed and Christmas was gaily celebrated. In the photograph above, soldiers are seen receiving greeting cards which the King and Queen had ordered to be sent to all the men who were serving oversea.

Photos, L.N.A.

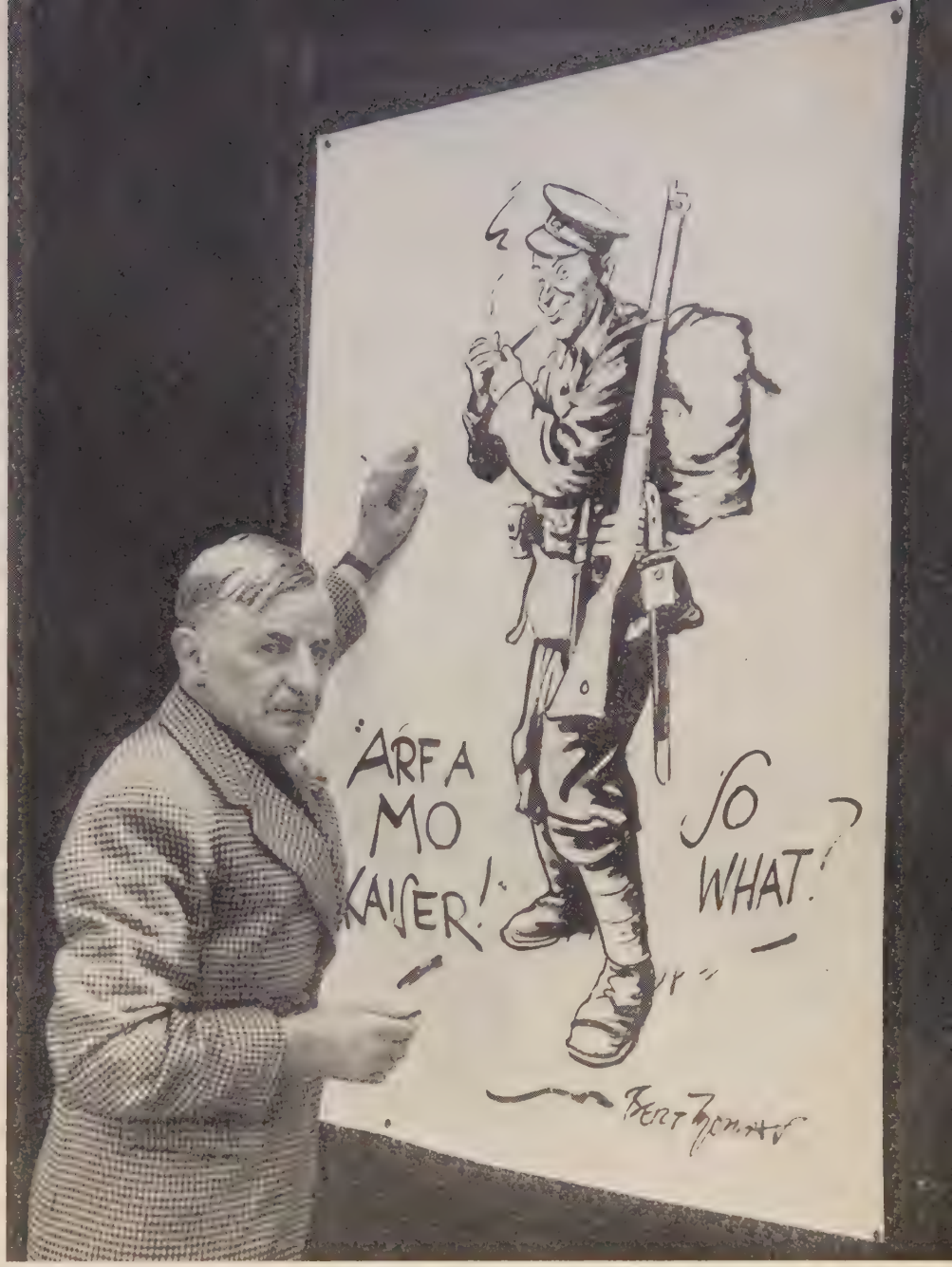


DULY DELIVERED AND MOST WELCOME

Only those who experienced first-hand the vicissitudes of overseas service could fully appreciate how much the Christmas gifts of 1914 meant to those at the front. Men of the Army Veterinary Corps are seen, left, receiving their share of the very acceptable Christmas Fund gifts.

FAMOUS POSTER THAT BROUGHT MILLIONS CHEER

In the misery of the trenches, in the last minutes before zero hour, and in the pain of wounds, tobacco was the soldier's greatest solace. "The Weekly Dispatch" opened a fund to make sure that no man should go short of his cigarette or his pipe, and to support the appeal, Mr. Bert Thomas, the famous black and white artist, drew his unforgettable poster "Half a mo', Kaiser!" It worked wonders, for from its first appearance in December 1914 until 1919 it was instrumental in helping to raise £250,000, and right through the war tobacco was sent to every front. Mr. Bert Thomas, who is seen standing beside his poster, was in the Artists Rifles, and twenty-four years later he has added the meaningful phrase, "So What?"



ALFRESCO PREPARATIONS

The fighting men of every service knew how to make the best of things wherever they might be. The photograph below was taken at Christmas-time in the first year of the war and shows the culinary efforts of two British soldiers being carried out under difficult conditions.

L.N.A.



AMAZING ARMISTICE!

The Historic Christmas Truce of 1914

by Capt. Sir Edward Hulse, Bart.

DESPITE the bitter fighting which had been going on for over four months, a remarkable armistice was observed in many sectors on Christmas Day 1914, and English and German soldiers ceased killing each other for one day and fraternized in a most genuine manner. In the following chapter a Captain of the Scots Guards describes the extraordinary scenes enacted between the lines during this highly unofficial truce. The author held a regular commission in the Scots Guards in 1914—he was killed in action, France, March 12, 1915, aged 25



EYE-WITNESS OF 1914 ARMISTICE
Sir Edward Hulse who, "dressed in a man's overcoat and a stocking-cap," as he describes his "uniform" at the time when he witnessed the events related in this chapter, is here seen in the undress uniform of the Scots Guards just before the war.

ON the 23rd we took over the trenches in the ordinary manner, relieving the Grenadiers, and during the 24th the usual firing took place, and sniping was pretty brisk. We stood to arms as usual at 6.30 a.m. on the 25th, and I noticed that there was not much shooting; this gradually died down, and by 8 a.m. there was no shooting at all, except for a few shots on our left (Border Regiment). At 8.30 a.m. I was looking out, and saw four Germans leave their trenches and come towards us; I told two of my men to go and meet them, *unarmed* (as the Germans were unarmed), and to see that they did not pass the half-way line.

We were 350 to 400 yards apart at this point. My fellows were not very keen, not knowing what was up, so I went out alone, and met Barry, one of our ensigns, also coming out from another part of the line. By the time we got to them they were three-quarters of the way over, and much too near our barbed wire, so I moved them back.

THEY were three private soldiers and a stretcher-bearer, and their spokesman started off by saying that he thought it only right to come over and wish us a happy Christmas, and trusted us implicitly to keep the truce. He came from Suffolk, where he had left his best girl and a 3½ h.p. motor-bike! He told me that he could not get a letter to the girl, and wanted to send one through me. I made him write out a postcard in front of me, in English, and I sent it off that night. I told him that she probably would not be a bit keen to see him again. We then entered on a long discussion on every sort of thing. I was dressed in an old stocking-cap and a man's overcoat, and they took me for a corporal, a thing which I did not discourage, as I had an eye to going as near their lines as possible. . . . I asked them what orders they had from their officers as to coming over to us, and they said *none*; they had just come over out of goodwill.

They protested that they had no feeling of enmity towards us at all, but that everything lay with their authorities, and that being soldiers they had to obey. I believe they were speaking the truth when they said this, and that they never wished to fire a shot again. They said that unless directly ordered they were not going to shoot again until we did. . . . We talked about the ghastly wounds made by rifle bullets, and we both agreed that neither of us used dum-dum bullets, and that the wounds are solely inflicted by the high-velocity bullet with the sharp nose, at short range. We both agreed that it would be far better if we used the old South African round-nosed bullet, which makes a clean hole. . . .

They think that our Press is to blame in working up feeling against them by publishing false "atrocity reports." I told them of various sweet little cases which I had seen for myself, and they told me of English prisoners whom they had seen with soft-nosed bullets, and lead bullets with notches cut in the nose. We had a heated and at the same time good-natured argument, and ended by hinting to each other that the other was lying!

'TIPPERARY' FOR THE GERMANS

I KEPT it up for half an hour, and then escorted them back as far as their barbed wire, having a jolly good look round all the time, and picking up various little bits of information which I had not had an opportunity of doing under fire! I left instructions with them that if any of them came out later they must not come over the half-way line, and appointed a ditch as the meeting place. We parted after an exchange of Albany cigarettes and German cigars, and I went straight to headquarters to report. On my return at 10 a.m. I was surprised to hear a hell of a din going on, and not a single man left in my trenches; they were completely denuded (against my orders), and nothing moved!

I heard strains of "Tipperary" floating down the breeze, followed by a tremendous burst of "Deutschland über Alles," and as I got to my own company headquarters dug-out I saw, to my amazement, not only a crowd of 150 British and Germans at the half-way house which I had appointed opposite my lines, but six or seven such crowds, all the way down our lines, extending towards the 8th Division on our right.

I bustled out and asked if there were any German officers in my crowd, and the noise died down (as this time I was myself in my own cap and badges of rank).

I FOUND two, but had to talk to them through an interpreter, as they could neither talk English nor French. . . .

I explained to them that strict orders must be maintained as to meeting half-way, and everyone unarmed; and we both agreed not to fire until the other did, thereby creating a complete deadlock and armistice (if strictly observed). . . .

Meanwhile Scots and Huns were fraternizing in the most genuine possible manner. Every sort of souvenir was exchanged, addresses given and received, photos of families shown, etc. One of our fellows offered a German a cigarette; the German said, "Virginian?" Our fellow said, "Aye,

straight-cut " ; the German said, " No, thanks, I only smoke Turkish ! " (Sort of 10/- a 100 me !) It gave us all a good laugh.

A German N.C.O. with the Iron Cross —gained. he told me, for conspicuous skill in sniping—started his fellows off on some marching tune. When they had done I set the note for " The Boys of Bonnie Scotland, where the heather and the bluebells grow," and so we went on, singing everything from " Good King Wenceslaus " down to the ordinary Tommies' song, and ended up with " Auld Lang Syne," which we all, English, Scots, Irish, Prussian, Wurttembergers, etc., joined in. It was absolutely astounding, and if I had seen it on a cinematograph film I should have sworn that it was faked . . .

FROM foul rain and wet the weather had cleared up the night before to a sharp frost, and it was a perfect day, everything white, and the silence seemed extraordinary after the usual din. From all sides birds seemed to arrive and we hardly ever see a bird generally. Later in the day I fed about fifty sparrows outside my dug-out, which shows how complete the silence and quiet was.

I must say that I was very much impressed with the whole scene, and also, as everyone else, astoundingly relieved by the quiet, and by being able to walk about freely. It is the first time, day or night, that we have heard no guns or rifle-firing since I left Havre and convalescence.

Just after we had finished " Auld Lang Syne " an old hare started up and, seeing so many of us about in an unwonted spot, did not know which way to go. I gave one loud " View Holloa," and one and all, British and Germans, rushed about giving chase, slipping up on the frozen plough, falling about, and after a hot two minutes we killed in the open, a German and one of our fellows falling together heavily upon the completely baffled hare. Shortly afterwards we saw four more hares and killed one again. Both were good heavy weight, and had evidently been out between the two rows of trenches for the last two months, well fed on the cabbage patches, etc., many of which are untouched on the no-man's-land. The enemy kept one and we kept the other.

It was now 11.30 a.m., and at this moment George Paynter arrived on the scene with a hearty, " Well, my lads, a merry Christmas to you ! This is d——d comic, isn't it ? " . . . George told them that he thought it only right that we should show that we could desist from hostilities on a day which was so important in both countries ; and he then said : " Well, my boys, I've brought you over something to celebrate this funny show with." And he produced from his pocket a large bottle of rum (not ration rum, but the proper stuff). One large shout went up, and the nasty little spokesman uncorked it and, in a heavy, ceremonious manner, drank our healths in the name of his " kamaraden." The bottle was then passed on and polished off before you could say " knife " . . .

During the afternoon the same extraordinary scene was enacted between the lines, and one of the enemy





WHEN NO MAN'S LAND WAS EVERY MAN'S LAND

Few incidents in modern warfare have been more strange or more moving than the spontaneous and quite unofficial Armistice of Christmas 1914 which Sir Edward Hulse describes in this chapter. It was not only in his sector that this memorable fraternization took place. The two photographs above show British officers in the Bridoux-Rouges Bancs Sector, with their temporary German friends in no-man's-land. Both photographs show the remarkable divergence between the uniforms of British and German officers and other ranks.

Imperial War Museum



TOMORROW THEY MUST FIGHT AGAIN

The "gentleman's agreement" not to fire during the Christmas Armistice did not forbid preparing for the time when the temporary peace must end. Here, at Rue de Bois, men of a Highland regiment are putting in part of Christmas Day constructing a breastwork of mud and hurdles. They are in full sight of the German line in the trees on the left, but not a shot was fired, and Sir Edward Hulse describes in this page how he saw Germans sitting on the parapet of their trenches, indifferent spectators.

Imperial War Museum

told me that he was longing to get back to London. I assured him that "So was I." He said that he was sick of the war, and I told him that when the truce was ended any of his friends would be welcome in our trenches, and would be well received, fed and given a free passage to the Isle of Man!

ANOTHER coursing meeting took place, with no result, and at 4.30 p.m. we agreed to keep in our respective trenches, and told them that the truce was ended. They persisted, however, in saying that they were not going to fire, and as George had told us not to unless they did, we prepared for a quiet night, but warned all sentries to be doubly on the alert.

During the day both sides had taken the opportunity of bringing up piles of wood, straw, etc., which is generally only brought up with difficulty under fire. We improved our dug-outs, roofed in new ones and got a lot of useful work done towards increasing our comfort. Directly it was dark I got the whole of my company on to improving and re-making our barbed-wire entanglements all along my front, and had my scouts out in front of the working parties to prevent any surprise. But not a shot was fired, and we finished off a real good obstacle unmolested.

On my left was the bit of ground over which we attacked on the 18th, and here the lines are only from 85 to 100 yards apart.

The Border Regiment were occupying this section on Christmas Day, and Giles Loder, our adjutant, went down there with a party that morning on hearing of the friendly demonstrations in front of my company, to see if he could come to an agreement about our dead, who were still lying out between the trenches. The trenches are so close at this point that, of course, each side had to be far stricter. Well, he found an extremely pleasant and superior stamp of German officer, who arranged to bring all our dead to the half-way line. We took them over there and buried 29 exactly half-way between the two lines. Giles collected all personal effects, pay-books and identity discs, but was stopped by the Germans when he told some men to bring in the rifles. All rifles lying on their side of the half-way line they kept carefully . . .

They apparently treated our prisoners well and did all they could for our wounded. This officer kept on pointing to our dead and saying, "*Les braves, c'est bien dommage.*" . . .

When George heard of it he went down to that section and talked to the nice officer and gave him a scarf. That same evening a German orderly came to the half-way line and brought a pair of warm, woolly gloves as a present in return for George.

THE same night the Borderers and we were engaged in putting up big trestle obstacles, with barbed wire all over them, and connecting them, and at this same point (namely, where we were only 85 yards apart) the Germans came out and sat on their parapet and watched us doing it, although we had informed them that the truce was ended. . . .

Well, all was quiet, as I said, that night; and next morning, while I was having breakfast, one of my N.C.O.'s came and



HE KILLED THE FATTED GOOSE FOR THE CHRISTMAS FEAST

Though Christmas day is not the festive time for the French people that it is for the British, they entered into the spirit of it at the memorable Christmas of 1914 and did their utmost to give their allies a happy time. Poultry runs were willingly raided so that a goose, a duck or a fowl might for once replace the Army rations. Here an old French farmer presents one of our men with a fat goose, and, with or without the usual trimmings, no doubt full justice will be done to it later on during a rest period.

Photo, L.N.A.

KINGLY MEMORIES



1917



1918





As befitted the leaders of a brave nation, all the three British kings of the years since 1914 took their share of war experience. In the top photograph King George V is seen at the Butte de Warlencourt with General Byng in July 1917. Centre is the Prince of Wales in 1918 on the Italian front, where he served as well as in France; while below is King George VI as a second-lieutenant walking on the deck of H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth with Lord Cromer.

Photos, Imperial War Museum and Humphrey Joel

OF TWENTY YEARS





1920



1936



1937



The men who fell in the war were never forgotten by King George V and his sons. The first celebration of Armistice Day in Whitehall took place in 1920, when, after the burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey, King George V unveiled the Cenotaph. In the top photograph he is laying a wreath on it after the ceremony. Centre is King Edward VIII laying his wreath in 1936, while (below) King George VI is placing his tribute in the first year of his reign.

Photos, Daily Mail, Topical, and L.N.A.



TOMMY'S HOTEL DE LUXE IN A FRENCH FARMYARD

To the men just down from the line after holding such trenches as are seen in page 284, a barn like this was luxury indeed. The roof is rainproof, the icy winds cannot penetrate the walls, and there is ample straw for bedding. This barn, occupied by the Scots Guards in December, 1914, was on the road near Sailly-sur-Lys. Later on in the war it was crowded, but not with soldiers resting, for concert parties gave their entertainments here to the most appreciative audiences that ever witnessed a "show."

Photo, C. Pilkington, in the Imperial War Museum



Photopress

ONE DAY OF PEACE — IT WAS CHRISTMAS

On Christmas Day 1914, as described in this chapter, there was real Christmas weather in Flanders. Beneath a clear sky fields and trees were decked with hoar-frost. Here, as seen in this remarkable photograph, during that memorable peace meeting of friend and foe, a party of British and German soldiers have forgotten the war, with all its horrors and hardships, for a few all-too-brief hours.

reported that the enemy were again coming over to talk. I had given full instructions, and none of my men was allowed out of the trenches to talk to the enemy. I had also told the N.C.O. of an advanced post which I have up a ditch to go out with two men, unarmed; if any of the enemy came over, to see that they did not cross the half-way line, and to engage them in pleasant conversation. So I went out, and found the same lot as the day before; they told me again that they had no intention of firing, and wished the truce to continue. I had instructions not to fire till the enemy did; I told them; and so the same comic form of temporary truce continued on the 26th, and again at 4.30 p.m. I informed them that the truce was at an end. We had sent them over some plum-puddings, and they thanked us heartily for them and retired again, the only difference being that instead of all my men being out in the no-man's-land, one N.C.O. and two men only were allowed out, and the enemy therefore sent fewer.

AGAIN both sides had been improving their comfort during the day, and again at night I continued on my barbed wire and finished it right off. We retired for the night all quiet, and were rudely awakened at 11 p.m. A headquarters' orderly burst into my dug-out and handed me a message. It stated that a deserter had come into the 8th Division lines and stated that the whole German line was going to attack at 12.15 midnight, and that we were to stand to arms immediately, and that reinforcements were being hurried up from billets in rear. I thought, at the time, that it was a d——d good joke on the part of the German deserter to deprive us of our sleep, and so it turned out to be. I stood my company to arms, made a few extra dispositions, gave out all instructions, and at 11.20 p.m. George arrived. . . . Suddenly *our* guns all along the line opened a heavy fire, and all the enemy did was to reply with 9-in. shell (heavy howitzers), *not one of which exploded*, just on my left. Never a rifle shot was fired by either side (except right away down in the 8th Division), and at 2.30 a.m. we turned in half the men to sleep and kept the other half awake on sentry.

WHAT THE DESERTER TOLD US

APPARENTLY this deserter had also reported that strong German reinforcements had been brought up, and named a place just in rear of their lines, where, he said, two regiments were in billets, that had just been brought up. Our guns were informed, and plastered the place well when they opened fire (as I mentioned). The long and short of it was that absolutely *nixt* happened, and after a sleepless night I turned in at 4.30 a.m., and was woken again at 6.30, when we always stand to arms before daylight. I was going to have another sleep at 8 a.m. when I found that the enemy were again coming over to talk to us (December 27). I watched my N.C.O. and two men go out from the advanced post to meet them, and hearing shouts of laughter from the little party when they met in front, I again went out myself.

They asked me what we were up to during the night, and told me that they had stood to arms all night and thought we were going to attack them when they heard our heavy shelling; also that our guns had done a lot of damage and knocked out a lot of their men in billets.

I TOLD them that a deserter of theirs had come over to us, and that they had only him to thank for any damage done, and that we, after a sleepless night, were not best pleased with him either! They assured me that they had heard nothing of an attack, and I fully believed them, as it is inconceivable that they would have allowed us to put up the formidable obstacles (which we had on the two previous nights) if they had contemplated an offensive movement.

Anyhow, if it had ever existed, the plan had miscarried, as no attack was developed on any part of our line, and here were these fellows still protesting that there was a truce, although I told them that it had ceased the evening before.

So I kept to the same arrangement, namely, that my N.C.O. and two men should meet them half-way, and strict orders were given that no other man was to leave the lines. . . . I admit that the whole thing beat me absolutely. In the evening we were relieved by the Grenadiers, quite openly (not crawling about on all fours, as usual), and we handed on our instructions to the Grenadiers in case the enemy still wished to pay visits. . . .



TRENCHES AS THEY WERE — AND AS THEY ARE

The photograph above gives some idea of the terrible conditions under which the men of the B.E.F. fought in the winter of 1915, exposed to the weather, often knee-deep in mud and with only the most meagre protection from enemy fire. It was taken by an officer of the Northumberland Hussars, who were then acting as infantry in the Bridoux-Rognes sector in February 1915. The photograph right shows a trench system of 1918, now preserved as a lasting memorial to the men who manned it in the stress of war. The sand-bags have been filled with concrete and are now as hard as stone. This trench at Vimy Ridge is shown as it is today.

Photos W. A. Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd., and Imperial War Museum



SECTION VIII

Winter and Neuve Chapelle

January 1 — March 13, 1915

THE first three months of 1915 on the Western front were remarkable only for the battle of Neuve Chapelle (March 10). In this section some incidents of this disastrous affair are told by two eye witnesses, Wilfred Ewart of the Scots Guards, and William Linton Andrews of the Black Watch. ¶ The humdrum duties of trench life, now becoming more and more fixed, are described by two soldiers, Private Frank Richards and Rifleman Smith. ¶ Beatty's successful action at the Dogger Bank is narrated by an officer of the Aurora who was present, and we are privileged to publish Lieut. Harold Rosher's personal account of his daring raid on German submarine bases. ¶ Finally, this section contains a remarkable story of a British soldier hidden for four years by Belgians.

* 54 January 1915

SERGEANT who WENT the WRONG WAY

The Tragic and the Comic in Trench Life

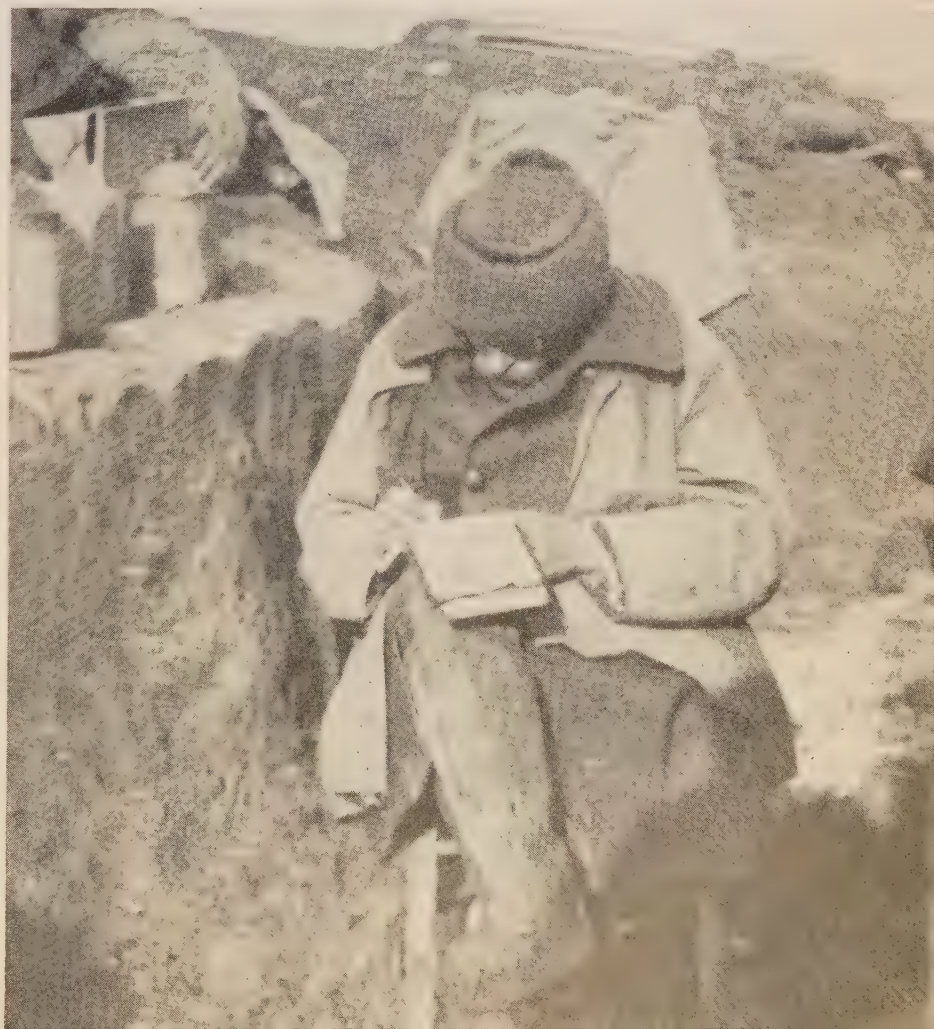
by Pte. Frank Richards, D.C.M., M.M.

THE first week in January 1915 we took over some trenches at Bois Grenier; they were about six or seven hundred yards in front of the village. There were only three houses occupied in the village; the remainder of the population had vanished. Early in October the Germans had been in possession of Bois Grenier for twenty-four hours before they were driven out. In a farm where we had our battalion headquarters a Frenchman was still living and tilling the land. A few yards from the farm was a tall new red-brick house in which lived an old lady and her daughter, and a very old lady was living next door to them. Three of us and a lance-corporal were left behind in the village for ten days to do police duty. The village used to get shelled every day, but we noticed that no shells ever fell near the farm or the red-brick house. So we billeted in a house opposite them.

French people could come up to the village at their own risk and take their furniture away, but they had to have a permit signed by the Assistant Provost-Marshal of police before they were allowed to come. Bois Grenier consisted of one main street and a side street, with farms dotted here and there.

WE stayed in the side street. Our chaps would come from the front line at night and take anything that might be useful to them in the trench. Also rations and R.E. stores were brought up to the village at night. Very few French people took the risk of fetching their furniture, but one hunchbacked Frenchman came into the village four days running with a deep French cart and took loads of furniture away. He took his own and he pinched other people's as well.

One old man came up with a cart one day, and when he arrived at his house there was hardly a rag left in it; the hunchback had been there the day before. The old man commenced to cry and blamed the British troops, but I made him understand that one of his own countrymen had taken the furniture. So he commenced to shout "Brigand!" I then took him to another house which was full of grand furniture and told him to help his self; there was not much left in that house by the time that deep cart was full,



'SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE'

Here Captain H. E. Lee, of a Scots regiment, is writing a letter home from a trench at Grand Flamengrie Farm in February 1915, but the only address he can give is "B.E.F., France," for the censor would allow no other, the position of each unit being kept strictly secret from those at home.

Imperial War Museum



WHEN WINTER CAME TO FLANDERS FIELDS

The trenches in this photograph show an advance on those seen in the top photograph in page 280, but as winter quarters they tried the endurance of the troops to the uttermost. Boards have been laid on the ground, but the men's boots are still caked with mud, and they wear sheepskin coats to protect them against the bitter cold of Flanders in winter. But things are improving, for there are sand-bags on the parapet and loopholes for the rifles. This trench was occupied by the 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers at La Boutillerie in 1915.

Imperial War Museum

and I assisted him to load some of the heavy pieces. I thought it queer that he did not hesitate to steal another man's furniture but had cried when he had found his own was stolen.

Of course it was only a question of time before everything would be blown to bits, and not one of us cared a damn whether a man who had the guts to come up to the village took away his own furniture or someone else's, or both. The hunchback was coming up to the village the following morning when a shell exploded just off the road near him. His horse was killed and his cart was smashed, but he himself was not hurt in any way. He picked himself up and ran back down the road like a hare. It was the last I ever saw of him; I expect he became a prosperous furniture dealer somewhere in France. He was eminently gifted that way. He must have told a good tale, because I never saw anyone come up to the village for furniture after that morning.

DID NOT LIKE THE BRITISH

THE old lady's daughter living in the red-brick house was about twenty-eight years of age and could speak English. In a conversation I had with her she told me that the German officers had better manners than the English officers, and that some of them had stayed in her house when they had occupied the village. Both she and her mother did not seem to like British soldiers, and we always suspected them of being spies. Every morning about 11 a.m. a priest used to come up to the village and visit them. He would stay about two hours and then depart, and we noticed that during the time he was in the village it was very rare that an enemy's shell came over.

IT might have been a pure coincidence, or it might have been that the German artillery always packed up about this time for their dinners, but we thought it very queer. We had never asked him to produce his permit, but decided one day that whoever was on duty the following morning would ask him to produce it, and if he did not have one to rush him to battalion headquarters, where the Assistant Provost-Marshal would be phoned for to send up some police to take him away.

I happened to be on duty next morning; the enemy had been shelling the village for a couple of hours and some houses about twenty yards to the right of us had been practically demolished. About 10.30 a.m. the shelling ceased, and at 11 a.m. the priest appeared on the scene. I halted him a few yards from the red-brick house and asked him to produce his permit. He didn't have one. I ordered him to put his hands up. He pretended that he didn't understand that order, so I put the muzzle of my rifle into his belly. His hands shot up like lightning; he understood that all right. I turned him around and marched him to battalion headquarters. The adjutant was standing outside and he called the colonel out. They both burst out laughing. I expect it was enough to make anyone laugh, the priest with his hands above his head and I with the muzzle of my rifle in his back, marching along.

I explained to the adjutant why I had arrested him, and later in the day some police came up and took him away. That same evening the four of us were ordered to rejoin our companies in the trenches, and four nights later, when I was back in the village drawing rations, one of the battalion



WHEN THEY WADED TO WAR

Wet weather brought far more discomfort to the troops than frost, as Private Richards points out in this chapter. The photograph above gives a vivid idea of trench conditions after a few days' rain. Lieut. R. C. Monev, a Scots officer, is working a hand-pump in a communication trench at Bois Grenier. He is knee-deep in water, and it is through this that the men will have to pass to and from the front line trenches.

Imperial War Museum



SUCH WAS LIFE IN 1915 TRENCHES

The two photographs in this page give a good idea of the daily life of the soldiers in the front line early in 1915. In the upper one a "strafe" is actually on. Shells and bullets are whistling overhead; one man looks out from the safety of a "funk hole" while those farther up duck to be safe from anything but a direct hit. In the lower photograph all is for the moment quiet. The men are manning a trench in the Houplines sector and have evidently had dealings with a village furniture shop, such as Private Richards describes in this chapter.

Photos, Photopress and Imperial War Museum





headquarters' signallers told me that the priest had put in an appearance at the village that morning again, for the first time since I had arrested him. He evidently had explained himself, but I honestly believe to this day that he and the young lady were spies.

OUR trenches at Bois Grenier were bad, and we were working day and night to put them in shipshape order. There was no communication trench and we used to travel back and forth to the village at night over a corduroy track which looked like a long black winding snake stretching over the top of the ground. Some of the men would be carrying up the rations during the night and then would be carrying up R.E. stores until stand-to in the morning.

We were now getting plenty of sandbags, barbed wire, duck-boards, and other trench materials. We were also getting a ration of coke and charcoal. We scrounged buckets from the village, and by stabbing holes in them converted them into fire-buckets. Half the duck-boards that were brought up at this time we chopped up for firewood.

Rations were also more plentiful and we were getting more bully beef and jam than we could eat, also plenty of biscuits; but the bread ration was still small—we were always short of that. Each man still drew his own rations and was his own cook [see the photograph in page 315—Ed.]: the regimental cooks were back with the transport and only cooked for us when we were out of action. It was not until the following September that hot tea and cooked food were sent up to the trenches for the battalion. A man who had plenty of tea and sugar, a tin of milk, bread and some candles was looked upon as a millionaire; but there were ways and means to get those things, especially if a man had a pal on the transport who was working in the quartermaster's stores.

A willow-ditch with about two feet of water in it ran from the enemy's trench through no-man's-land and through our trench; we drew water from it for drinking and cooking. [Later in the War this was strictly forbidden].

ONE night a patrol which had gone forward along it about one hundred and fifty yards discovered some dead bodies lying in it, who I expect had been killed early in October; the ditch may have been dry at that time. Orders were then issued that we were not to drink any more of the ditch water. But we still continued to drink it; our insides were now as tough as the outsides of our bodies.

Our trenches were about three hundred yards from the enemy's and we frequently sent out night patrols,



WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?

Innumerable lives were saved in the trenches by periscopes, for they made it unnecessary for any man to put his head above the parapet to watch the enemy and also run a good chance of being picked off by a sniper. The top photograph shows the earliest type of periscope officially issued to the Army, while below, in the "Rue du Bois," in February 1915, an officer has improvised a makeshift one with a stick and a small mirror.

Photopress and Imperial War Museum



Photopress

POST OF PERIL

The sniper's lot was far from a happy one. This man, posted in a ruined building, is waiting for an enemy head to show, but if he is spotted in his eyrie he will have the concentrated attention of enemy guns.

generally an officer and two men, sometimes a sergeant and two men. The main object of patrols was to try and discover where the enemy had their listening-posts and also what regiment was holding the trenches in front of us.

SOMETIMES the Germans would send out a strong patrol of between twenty and thirty men, which would spread out like a fan over the ground they were travelling, and it was quite possible, when they had a large patrol out like that, for one of our patrols to get right in the centre of theirs before spotting them, and if the German patrol spotted them first their flank men would simply have to close in and our patrol would be surrounded.

When a patrol went out, word was passed up and down the line and no shots were fired until they returned, unless it was to fire a flare telling them to return. One night three of us went out on patrol: we had gone out about one hundred yards walking and then began to crawl.

We had crawled a considerable way towards their trench when we spotted forms moving to right and left of us: we knew at once that we were inside the ring of a large German patrol. They were walking, and there was a possibility that they hadn't seen us, so we did what another patrol had done a fortnight before—we separated and lay very still, pretending we were dead men.

I CRAWLED into a shell hole, which was half full of water, and laid down with half my body in the water. We had blackened our faces and bayonets before going out. I unfixed my bayonet and put it underneath my leg. Shortly after I could hear whispering voices and knew that the enemy patrol was returning, and two of them passed by me on each side of the shell hole. I lay there a little longer and then had a quick look to my front and could see their forms disappearing in the distance. The trick had worked all right with the three of us, and we got back to our trench quite safe. But we *were* in a state, and I believe I never felt so cold during the whole of the war as what I did when I was lying in that water in the shell hole. I don't know whether the patrol spotted us or not, but their flank men had closed up when they were returning.

HE WALKED INTO GERMAN LINES

ONE very dark night, with not a star in sight, a sergeant and two men from B Company were out on patrol. Some hours later the two men returned without the sergeant. The two men reported that after wandering about no-man's-land and falling in shell holes here and there, the sergeant decided to return.

They started to argue the point as to which direction their trenches lay, the sergeant saying they lay one way, and the men the other. The enemy had not sent up any flares or fired any shots—they must have had a working party out or a patrol. The sergeant then commenced to walk to what he thought were his own lines, but were really the Germans, informing the men that he would report them when he got back.

The men decided to wait where they were for a bit until either a German flare or one of their own went up. Suddenly machine-gun and rifle-fire rung out and up went a German flare, which told them that they had been right and the sergeant wrong.

The sergeant no doubt had walked up to the edge of the German barbed wire, shouted in English that it was one of the patrol returning, and had been absolutely riddled. Next day a body could be seen lying over the enemy's wire which had not been there the day before.

About February periscopes were introduced in the trenches: they were little mirrors stuck up on the back parapet, and day-sentries could sit on the fire-step of the trench and view no-man's-land in front. Before they were introduced day-sentries would have to get up on the fire-step and take a sharp look ahead every now and then. Many a day-sentry had been drilled through the head before periscopes had been introduced. One morning Stevens and I were watching a man fixing a hand-pump; the trench at this point took a sharp turn to our right front and we were on the corner. It was Berry, the man who had that bullet in his haversack on the Marne. He had his boots, socks and puttees off, with his trousers rolled up above his knees, and his language was delightful to listen to.

SOON he slipped on his back in the water and we burst out laughing. Then suddenly Stevens too dropped down in a sitting position with his back against the back of the trench; but this was no laughing matter. A sniper on our right front had got him right through the head. No man ever spoke who was shot clean through the brain: some lived a few seconds and others longer. Stevens lived about fifteen minutes. We buried him that night in Bois Grenier cemetery.

. . . . . .

WE liked the hard and frosty weather: we could move about better. We could also keep ourselves much warmer than when it was raining, which caused us a lot of misery, generally being up to our eyebrows in mud. At night when it was freezing hard we sometimes used to hang our shirts on the barbed wire in front and fetch them in before dawn. The idea was to freeze the crawlers. We would brush as many dead ones off as we could find, then rub the stiffening out of the shirts and put them back on. In a few minutes' time those that we had not found would be coming back to life and were soon hale and hearty. Being very hungry after their night out they would commence to bite us as if they had had no food for weeks. We tried many experiments to get rid of them, but they always beat us. The Old Soldier used to say that if a man had the craftiness of a woman and the staying abilities of a louse he could easily conquer the world.

My FOUR YEARS in a Frenchwoman's CUPBOARD

by Trooper Patrick Fowler

THIS astounding story of how an intensely brave and resourceful Frenchwoman sheltered from January 1915 to November 1918 a British soldier who had been cut off from his regiment at Le Cateau and wandered for four months, is told by the soldier himself, Trooper Patrick Fowler, late of the 11th Hussars. Fowler spent many weary hours hidden in a cupboard with German soldiers billeted in the same room. Over and over again he owed his life to the quick wit of Mme. Belmont-Gobert, who received a grant from the British Government and the Order of the British Empire. Her famous cupboard is now an exhibit in the Imperial War Museum



TROOPER FOWLER TODAY *G.P.U.*

Strange and grim adventures are retained in the memory of many an ex-serviceman, but none was more singular than that recalled here by Trooper Fowler, who, after the débâcle at Le Cateau, found himself amid the enemy, where he remained, and yet eluded capture, throughout the war.

I FIRST met Louis Basquin in the thickest part of the woods which skirt the French village of Bertry. Basquin was a woodcutter. I was a fugitive soldier—cut off from my regiment, the 11th Hussars, at the battle of Le Cateau in August 1914.

For four months I had wandered the country in the Cambrai district with two companions. Together we had lived as best we could—a meal here and there from kindly peasants, one night sleeping in a haystack, another in a thicket. Always we were faced with the spectre of capture and the prospect of spending the rest of the war in a prison camp, for the zone in which we were at large was now in the occupation of Germans.

Penalties were very severe for those of the Allied armies who failed to give themselves up, even more severe for those who aided soldiers in escaping, or harboured them in their homes.

When on that bitterly cold January forenoon I emerged from a little clearing, I fear it was a sorry figure, unshaven, unkempt, and half-starved, which came face to face with Louis Basquin as he hewed at an enormous tree trunk.

I was alone. My companions and I had separated a few days before, thinking we might have a better chance of breaking through the enemy lines singly than together.

The woodcutter could see that I was pretty well "all in." The tattered khaki uniform that I was endeavouring to hide under an old civilian coat I had managed to borrow, unmistakably marked me as a British soldier.

Neither of us could speak the other's language very well, but it did not take me long to realize that Basquin was my friend, prepared to help me elude the common enemy.

His first act was to share with me his lunch of bread and cheese. Then he led me to a haystack, signed me to tunnel into its depths, somehow made me understand he would return later, and then covered me up.

True to his word, he returned after dusk and led me to the village of Bertry, where he lived. No sooner had we entered the village than I saw two German military police loom up out of the darkness. They barred our way. Basquin, a well-known local figure, nudged me. I knew I had to hold my tongue.

"What are you doing out at this time of night?" questioned one of the policemen. There was a stringent curfew in all occupied territories.

"I have been to see my mother-in-law who is very ill," explained Basquin.

Despair filled my heart. Was my liberty, after the months of hardship and anxiety I had endured to avoid capture, to be snatched from me by this chance encounter?

Suddenly revolver shots sounded. There were shouts and the sound of running feet farther up the street.

The attention of the police was at once diverted and, without further questions, they hurried away to break up a group of German soldiers engaged in a violent quarrel.

I felt Basquin's hand on my arm, and in a moment we were both hastening down a dim cobbled alley. It had been a narrow escape. When we arrived at his humble dwelling he gave me food as generously as his meagre war rations would allow and set about devising a hiding-place where I could remain in comparative safety.

"I think it would be better if you stayed at the house of my mother-in-law." Basquin said presently. "Her rooms are larger and it will make it



G.P.U.

AS A HUSSAR

This photograph shows Trooper Fowler of the 11th Hussars as he was in the early days of his Army career, and before fortune dealt him the strange fate described here in his amazing story, which is probably unique in the whole history of the war.



SHE RISKED DEATH G.P.U.

For a civilian to shield and aid a fugitive British soldier in territory occupied by the Germans meant terrible punishment and even death if discovery were made. Yet Madame Belmont-Gobert, seen above, unflinchingly acted as Fowler's protector and friend for four years, pitting her wits and calm courage against the vigilance and suspicions of the ever-present enemy.

easier to hide you than in my tiny house."

Basquin, who had been pronounced unfit for war service by a French tribunal, was married to the eldest daughter of Mme. Belmont-Gobert, who lived a few streets away with her other two daughters, Euphemie, the youngest, and Angele.

Now came the problem as to where I was to be hidden, for it would have to be in a place unlikely to be suspected. All possible hiding-places were carefully examined during the periodical house-to-house searches organized by the German military authorities.

"*Le buffet!*" exclaimed Angele suddenly.

All eyes turned to a cupboard that stood in a corner of one of the ground-floor rooms.

Perhaps it would be more accurate to describe it as a squat wardrobe, for it was less than six feet high, with a perpendicular wooden partition dividing it into two sections, one of which was shelved, the other provided with pegs for hanging clothes.

Little did I think, on that day in 1915, when I first squeezed into the confined space Mme. Belmont-Gobert made by removing her clothes, that this piece of furniture would be my home for almost four years.

I had been in my hiding-place less than a week when it was rumoured that German soldiers were to be billeted in the house.

A week later they came—eight of them. They occupied the upper part of the house, but spent much of their time drinking coffee and gossiping in the room where I was hidden.

Can you imagine my feelings as I sat huddled in the darkness of that stifling recess listening to their laughter, their quarrels, their dubious jokes, their coarse talk with the daughters of the house?

One night I must have moved slightly, for the woodwork creaked.

To me it sounded like the crack of a pistol; certainly it was enough to make madame spring up in her chair by the fireside and, with great presence of mind, exclaim to the soldiers sitting round playing cards, "*Ah, ces bêtes souris*" (Oh, those wretched mice!).

And, with quick resourcefulness, I heard her advance and flick round the outside of the wardrobe in mock pursuit of a phantom mouse.

There were many who had to be let into the secret of Mme. Belmont-Gobert's cupboard. The reason was the matter of food.

As the war progressed the rationing of food increased in severity. The requirements of the Germans in occupation always came first. It was in face of the alarming shortage of food, particularly in a household as impoverished as that of madame's, that some of her friends had to know of my existence.

Many of them contributed eggs, milk, bread, and potatoes to supplement her frugal larder.

Sometimes I was so hungry that I stole from my hiding-place while the Germans were out and hacked off a few slices of their unpalatable, though sustaining, black bread. I often wonder if they missed it.

A WRETCHED little terrier nearly caused my downfall. Day after day he would be brought in by his mistress—a notorious gossiper, and so not in the secret—and I dreaded the moment when his shrill yapping and scratching sounded without.

Sometimes the billeted Germans were there at the same time, and I once went so far as to borrow a hat pin from Angele. Next time the little brute started his sniffings I jabbed at him through the crevice.

I think by the sudden yelp he let out, that the pin-point must have made itself felt, and I heard him scurry away. Mme. Belmont-Gobert's resourcefulness again saved a situation that might have developed into a serious one.

"Poor Dodo," I heard her say, "he must have put his nose on a nail."

At any rate, he never came again.

Shortly afterwards warning notices that the death penalty awaited any one found harbouring soldiers of the Allied armies after a certain date were posted all over the town.

I THEREFORE deemed it too risky for Mme. Belmont-Gobert to keep me a moment longer in her house. I pointed out the grave perils that she and her brave daughter were running.

"We will find you another hiding-place, then," said madame, persuaded at last. So, one day, clothed as a peasant woman, and carrying an umbrella with which I shielded my face, I was guided to a barn. I took out some loose palings and hid myself.

Shall I ever forget that rat-infested hole or the month of indescribable horror I spent there? For four weeks I never saw the sun. By day I could hear the tramp of patrolling soldiers overhead. At night Basquin would creep cautiously over the field to bring me food.

When the scare died down I returned to my cupboard. On the return journey with Mme. Belmont-Gobert again as my escort, there was a dramatic moment. I inadvertently allowed the shawl to slip from my head.

At that moment a German soldier came staggering past, the worse for drink. He must have been pretty far gone, or he would have seen the beard I had grown.

"Hallo, my dears, what are you doing at this time of night?" he hiccoughed.

And once again the quick wit of Mme. Belmont-Gobert stood me in good stead. With a knowing flourish she produced a small bottle of some liqueur—there was a shortage of all ordinary drinks—from her corsage, and with a wink of her eye offered it to the carousing Teuton.

As he loosened the stopper and raised the flask to his lips with a convivial gesture, I hastened on my way, keeping my face averted. A moment later I was joined by madame. We were saved.

It was not the only time I was forced to adopt a woman's disguise. There were rumours of another house-to-house search and I was at once hurried to a haystack at the back of the house in my dress and shawl.

PERIL OF THE PITCH-FORK

AFTER some hours hidden under an immense weight of hay, I heard German voices. A large number of bottles of wine, which it was suspected were hidden in the hay, were being searched for. The next thing I knew was that pronged forks were being plunged into my hiding-place. But once more fortune favoured me, and although the forks came perilously near, I escaped unhurt.

The months wore on, and then one day the news trickled through that the Germans required the whole of Mme. Belmont-Gobert's house for billeting purposes, and she must leave. She at once set about finding a new dwelling. Eventually a two-roomed cottage some distance away with a loft above was picked.

The problem of the removal of my cupboard with the rest of the furniture arose. It was decided that I was to remain in my hiding-place.

Basquin enlisted the services of a villager to help lift the cumbersome receptacle on to a waiting cart. Even as I felt myself swaying in mid-air the voice of a passing German offering to lend a hand reached me.

"No, no!" I heard the alarmed voice of Angele protest. "Leave it to them. They can manage alone."

And then I could feel the added aid of the volunteer as I was hoisted aloft and dumped none too gently on the vehicle, which shortly afterwards moved off with a rumble of cobbles in my ears and a great deal of jarring of my limbs.

THE German must have been of great good nature, for when, after a series of lurches, the conveyance suddenly stopped, I could hear him again volunteering to assist with the unloading.

It was not until I heard the breezy sallies of his departure that I was able to breathe again.

Once my cupboard was inspected. By an amazing premonition of Mme. Belmont-Gobert's I was not in it. I had been so bold as to leave my hiding-place one evening and relax in an armchair in the company of Mme. Belmont-Gobert and her daughter.

PRESENTLY there came a peremptory knocking at the locked door. I sprang back into the cupboard and pulled the door to, but while Angele gained time with a great noise of grappling with an obstinate door fastening, Madame signed me with imploring gestures to a place beneath the mattress of a large feather bed in an adjoining room.

It was lucky. Never had the house been so thoroughly searched, for even the cupboard was included this time. After they had plunged their bayonets into the mattress beneath which I lay—I think it was wine again rather than me for which they were looking—once more I muttered a silent prayer to my guardian angel as they left me unscathed.

I LIVED in that cupboard for two more years. And then, one memorable day in October 1918, came the retreat of the Germans from their advance lines.

The village of Bertry was evacuated and British troops poured in—Canadian cavalry and the South African Scottish. I was in the street at the time.

But the anti-climax of my joy at freedom came when I was challenged as a deserter after all I had suffered. There was grim irony in being arrested and marched between two military policemen to the British headquarters.

Had it not been for the amazing coincidence that, as I trudged along with my escort, I came face to face with the officer who had commanded the troops of the 11th Hussars which had been cut off from the main body of the regiment at Le Cateau four years before and that he testified to my true identity, I might even now not be alive to tell the tale.



SECRET BILLET AMID BOCHE BILLETS

It was in the cupboard, shown above, that Trooper Fowler spent many weary hours while within a few feet German soldiers sat, ate, talked and smoked. For four years went on this amazing escapade of an English soldier hiding in the very midst of the enemy, with discovery constantly imminent. The cupboard is now in the Imperial War Museum.

Imperial War Museum

I SAW BEATTY TRIUMPH

The Blücher Sunk at Dogger Bank

by an Officer of H.M.S. Aurora

THIS vivid account of the naval battle of the Dogger Bank is written by an officer who was on board the Aurora, the light cruiser which first sighted the German fleet and fired the first shot. He relates the progress of the battle which led to the wounding of the Lion, Beatty's flagship, and the historic sinking of the German battle-cruiser Blücher. Hundreds of the German crew were drowned, and the British efforts at rescue were called off owing to attacks by a German Zeppelin

WE left harbour on the evening of the 23rd of January, 1915. It was bitterly cold, and on the previous day snow had fallen. We were getting used to being cold, however, and had realized that no clothes yet designed can keep the extremities warm during a four-hour watch when you are steaming at twenty knots, and when the needs of a constant look-out and limited space prohibit adequate exercise.

Daylight broke—with an ill grace—on Sunday, the 24th, about 6.45 a.m., by which time we were out of our bunks or hammocks, and prepared, more or less, for what a fresh day might bring. I had had the middle watch (which lasts from midnight to 4 a.m.) and about two hours' sleep in my clothes after it, so I was not feeling bright. In fact, I was morosely ruminating that war was an over-rated amusement, and that the North Sea was a more sanguinary ocean than the colour of the water indicated.

It was a few minutes past seven when the Aurora, a light cruiser of the new "destroyer-destroyer" class, sighted a two-masted, three-funnelled man-of-war, with several destroyers in company, on the starboard bow, about eight thousand yards distant.

In the dim light of a winter morning a ship four miles away, steaming at twenty knots in the lee of her own smoke, is a difficult object to recognize in detail, and in this instance was first of all mistaken for one of our own County class cruisers. Actually she was the Kolberg, a German light cruiser built in 1910, with an armament of twelve 4·1-in. guns.

The Kolberg knew full well that any ships met in this area would be British, and so she was enabled to get her guns to bear and open fire before the Aurora could determine with certainty whether friend or foe had been encountered. Such an advantage usually lay with the Germans because, on the few occasions when they did come out, it was easy for them to have their whole crews constantly at their stations, an ideal state of preparedness which the day after day patrol of the British Navy made impossible.

HIS FLAGSHIP IN THREE FAMOUS FIGHTS

Admiral Beatty flew his flag in H.M.S. Lion not only at the battle of the Dogger Bank, so graphically described in this chapter, but previously at the battle of Heligoland Bight, and in 1916 when he commanded the Battle-Cruiser Squadron at Jutland. At the Dogger Bank the Lion was so badly damaged that she had to be towed back to port and Admiral Beatty transferred his flag to the Princess Royal.

Central Press



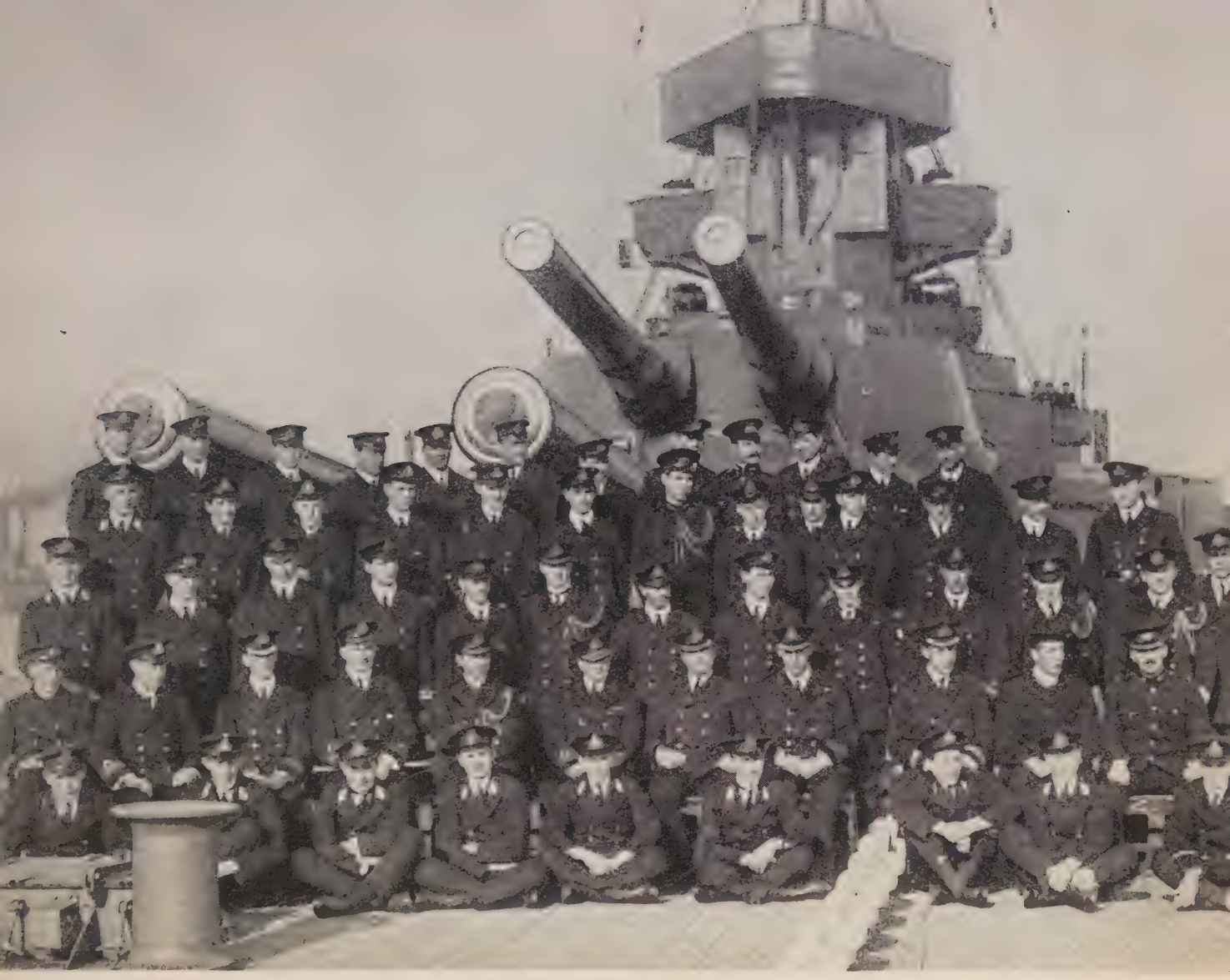
STILL, if the Aurora started badly, she had managed to maintain an ascendency after five minutes or so, by which time she had found the range and was hitting the Kolberg, so that at 7.20 a.m. the latter turned to the south-east and fell back upon her battle-cruisers.

Simultaneously, these enemy ships came in sight of the Aurora and of some of the light cruisers and torpedo craft which had been drawn by the sound of the firing, and the report of them was at once signalled to Vice-Admiral Beatty, in the Lion.

While the Aurora and Kolberg were still blazing away at each other—about sixty rounds were fired off on either side, I suppose—Beatty's battle cruisers had turned towards the enemy, and by 7.30 that morning the personal animosities of the two light cruisers were forgotten in the pursuit of bigger game.

The importance of a light cruiser action such as the Aurora's and Kolberg's was trifling, of course, compared with that of the Dreadnought action which was to follow.

When the pursuit of the enemy's main squadron commenced, the two fleets



THEY FOUGHT AT THE DOGGER BANK

This group of the officers of H.M.S. Lion was photographed soon after she was commissioned as Admiral Beatty's flagship, and they were serving in her at the battle of the Dogger Bank. Admiral Beatty is in the centre of the second row, sitting immediately above the midshipmen, and Captain Chatfield, his flag-captain throughout the war, is on his right. Behind the group is the forward turret carrying four of the Lion's eight 13·5 guns.

Photo, Russell, Southsea

were some twelve to fourteen miles apart, and the enemy were only visible to us in the form of a smudge on the horizon. Very little of the actual hulls of the ships could be seen, except from aloft. How different a battle scene from that of old time, when ships closed to within two hundred yards, or else actually lay alongside so that the men could board each other!

It was 8.45 a.m. before our slight superiority in speed brought us within range of the enemy, and I suppose that this hour preceding the battle should have been a solemn and inspiring one to us. Certainly one has always considered that a big-ship action, especially one between battle-cruisers, since these ships have as great a striking power as battleships with less armour protection, would be a nerve-racking and murderous affair. But, in practice, until the actual moment of departure for eternity arrives, one remains calm and acts as usual, simply because there is so very little to get excited about. . . .

We, the light cruisers, had been steaming along on the quarter of our battle-cruisers for just over an hour, when the leading ship, the Lion, fired the first shot of the main action. The guns of all the ships had been trained on the enemy since the chase had commenced, but up to now the enemy were too distant to justify firing, so that when we at last saw a spurt of flame shoot from the Lion's foremost turret, we felt that the period of suspense was finally over. Believe me, the whole squadron would have liked to have given the flagship a cheer.

The range at this time was between nine and ten miles, I think. This meant that the battle-cruiser's guns had to be cocked up at an angle of sixteen or eighteen degrees in order to carry the shot this great distance.

Our rear battle-cruisers, and of course the light cruisers and destroyers with their small 6-in. or 4-in. guns, were out of range, and our interest was centred in the Lion, and shortly afterwards in the Tiger, as with beautifully simultaneous salvos, this new Dreadnought followed Admiral Beatty's flagship into action.

As each gun was fired a spurt of flame shot out of the muzzle, rapidly followed, so it seemed, by a handful of smoke, which would rise in stately fashion above our ships, drifting ring-shaped over them, for all the world like a leisurely smoker blowing rings from his cigar. And then, about fifteen seconds after the flash—and what an age this fifteen seconds seemed!—a white splash of water would shoot up near the distant enemy.



'Daily Mail' copyright

LAST MOMENTS OF A CRUISER AND 792 MEN

The most remarkable photograph ever taken during a naval action is that reproduced above from a snapshot taken by an officer in another ship of Admiral Beatty's squadron during the battle of the Dogger Bank. It shows the Blücher just before she sank with hundreds of her crew still clinging to her side and some slipping down into the sea. Of her crew of 1026 only 234 survived. She went down after a gallant fight of three hours against tremendous odds, and the official historian of the Admiralty declared that "as an example of discipline, courage, and fighting spirit her last hours have seldom been surpassed." This photograph is not only intensely dramatic but it has an enduring interest as a pictorial document in naval history.

This splash, anxiously awaited by the gunnery control officers of the firing ship, gave the means of judging whether the shot fell short of, or beyond, the enemy. Based on this would come a rapid decision by the control officer ; an order passed to the guns ; the gun sights altered ; the guns themselves relaid on the distant smoke smudge ; an order to fire passed to all gun-layers—and another spurt of flame. Then smoke issued from the cocked-up muzzles, as two-thirds of a ton of metal searched hungrily for a victim.

A FEW minutes after the Lion opened fire a strange anomaly drifted into the midst of the battle. As if to mock at the display of armoured strength, there came down between the British and German lines two humble Dutch trawlers, their patched sails flapping idly from side to side, their crews apparently all unconscious of the historic fight that was developing in front of them. Just as they reached the head of our line the Germans opened fire, and the shell, falling short, pitched between the Lion and the trawlers. But they continued on their way undamaged, and half an hour later merged into the smoke of our light cruisers and destroyers on the port quarter of the battle-cruisers, and were lost to sight. After this little " side-issue," our attention was soon drawn again to the Lion and Tiger, and ere long to the Princess Royal and New Zealand, as they, too, began to speak.

Even to us, who had often seen men-of-war steaming at high speeds, carrying out various firings—the action was undeniably wonderful and awe-inspiring.

We knew that those big white splashes of foam which were spurting up on either side of our leading ships were caused by enemy shells that had just missed their target, but which next time, if the German control officers made the right " spotting " correction, would be sending British seamen to the Great Beyond, and might even cripple outright one of our ships.

OF course, any shot which we fired might wipe out of existence a German unit; but the enemy looked far away and almost unreal, and it was difficult to see if our shots were falling close to them or not. To us they still showed only as a smoke smudge, while our own ships, being so close, looked temptingly big targets. Herein lies one of the disproportions that a long-range battle will always exercise on the mind, and one which we have to face and balance in action.

With each hour that passed, Heligoland and the protection of the German minefields drew twenty-five miles closer. Should we be able to stop them in time, or would the German ships again escape undamaged to their ports ?

Anxiously we gazed at the enemy through our glasses in the hope of seeing some outward effect of the hundred or more projectiles that we had fired, but it was 10 a.m. before we were first rewarded. About that time we noticed that the left-hand ship was all but hidden by a brownish black smoke, which we soon realized was caused by a fire on board, as flames were seen to leap occasionally from her upper works.

I could see her being hit now and again, too, for as a salvo of, let us say, five shots came from the guns of the Lion or Tiger, two white splashes would rise this side of the Blücher (she was the target at first) and two beyond, while one shot, the one that counted, caused no white splash, but only showed itself to us in the British Fleet as a reddish brown flash which was barely distinguishable from the flash of the enemy's guns.



BEATEN AT THE DOGGER BANK

Admiral von Hipper, who commanded the German battle-cruiser squadron at the Dogger Bank, though a fine sailor, brought discredit on the German Navy by his ruthless bombardment of the coast towns of Hartlepool and Scarborough in December 1914

Central Press

COLD-BLOODED DEVILRY

ONE does not see that " immense flash followed by an explosion rending the great ship in twain," which some imaginative mind has pictured, for a shell striking a ship's side is unobtrusive in its deadliness until it becomes the cause of a fire, or mayhap an explosion. In fact, a hit is usually less noticeable than a miss.

Perhaps the most impressive feature of a modern naval action is the cold-blooded devilry with which shots fall on and round a target so far away, searching out their victim with an apparent unconcern and simplicity, which is so much at variance with the deadly effect if they hit.

It was about 10.45—approximately after two hours' firing—that the Blücher first exposed to us the true effects of our shooting. Apparently out of control, she suddenly and dramatically swerved out of the German line. With clouds of black smoke belching from her funnels and her upper works partly on fire, she steamed straight towards us.

In a few moments, however, control had been regained, and she was steadied once more on an escaping course, though now well to the left of her consorts and closer to us. Seemingly, she was a beaten ship. This brought our rear and left-hand battle-cruiser, the Indomitable, into range. One of the first three battle-cruisers built for our Navy, the Indomitable had not yet been able to fire, for she was somewhat astern of the other ships, newer and faster as they all were, and her 12-in. guns were almost totally ineffective at such a range.

AS we had steamed under her stern and past her but a few minutes before, we had especially felt sympathy with her in her inaction, as, despite the remarkable speed she was developing for her class of ship, she remained so near and yet so far from the fight.

However, her captain, with an anticipatory eye on the Blücher, had been steering a little to port of the other ships, so that now, hardly waiting for orders, he altered more to port, and proceeded, with the assistance of the Meteor and some other destroyers, to engage and finish off the unfortunate Blücher.

Up to this time the battle had been of a very simple form, and the tactics those of plain escape and pursuit, but hereabouts complications set in and events of a more varied nature commenced. The Blücher, as explained,



THE TIGER SHOWED HER TEETH AT THE DOGGER BANK

H.M.S. Tiger, which took part in the battle of the Dogger Bank, was not completed until October 1914, and was then the latest and largest battle-cruiser in the British Navy. She had a displacement of 28,500 tons, a speed of about 31 knots, and her main armament was eight 13·5 guns. She was not badly hit in the battle and lost only one officer and nine men killed with three officers and five men wounded.

Photo, Stephen Cribb

was a beaten ship, and Admiral Hipper must have realized this and decided to sacrifice her, while concentrating his endeavours on saving his three larger ships, which, it should be realized, had also suffered damage and casualties from our gunfire, two of them being on fire.

THE German light cruisers and torpedo craft were closing in from the starboard beam, where they had found themselves at the beginning of the action, and they now threatened a torpedo attack on our heavy ships, while they simultaneously endeavoured to conceal the movements of their own battle-cruisers by making a smoke screen between the two fleets.

It looked as if we smaller ships were going to get a show, and we rapidly steamed up from the quarter to a bow position so that we could engage the small craft of the enemy before they could force an attack home. But the attack was a feint, and while some of our light cruisers and destroyers went on ahead and to port to attack the Blücher, the remainder stayed on the starboard and disengaged side of our big ships, keeping, you may be sure, an apprehensive eye on the ricochets from the enemy that were haphazardly dropping around.

We had been there but a few minutes when a submarine was sighted ahead, and our battle-cruisers altered to port away from the supposed danger to a course more parallel to the new direction the enemy had assumed.

Hardly had this manoeuvre been completed when the Lion received the lucky shot which was to influence so greatly the course of the battle. As she hauled out of the line to starboard, leaving the Tiger, Princess Royal, and New Zealand to continue the pursuit of the enemy, many of us thought that she had hit a mine or been torpedoed by a submarine. We did not realize at the time that the big column of water that shot up on her port side was caused by a shell striking her on the water line.

Whatever might be the cause of her leaving the line, it was at once apparent to all of us that, with her speed reduced to twelve knots or so, she was in great danger from submarine attack, and a light cruiser with half a dozen destroyers at once closed to protect her. As she lay there with a big list to port, her guns still cocked up at the big angle at which they had been firing, and with many of her crew on deck, the great Dreadnought made a wonderful sight.

BEATTY'S DAUNTLESS SIGNAL

PICTURE to yourself this monster fighting ship, stripped bare for action and apparently as formidable as during the past few hours, when the murderous fire of her 13·5-in. turrets had made her seem so omnipotent; and yet, in contrast, apparently unable to steam, and perhaps about to sink. So she appeared to us as we hastened to her aid. Many of us thought her to be a doomed ship and that her crew were on deck preparatory to abandoning her.

It was not long, however, before we found that she was quite seaworthy, though unable to steam more than slow speed, and that her crew had mustered on deck in order to watch and cheer their admiral over the side as he boarded the destroyer Attack in order to be taken back to the battle.

The Blücher, the sight of which might have reassured us, was out of our vision and we—well, we were out of it; and the admiral's dauntless signal, "Engage the enemy more closely," that was still flying from the Lion's masthead, merely seemed to increase our jealousy.

WE now know that actually the Blücher was at that moment receiving her deathblow, while the other ships, which at this time were suffering heavy punishment, were but barely making good their escape from fatal disaster.

Afterwards we learnt that the action was finally broken off on account of the submarine and mines, the danger of which, it should be remembered, was very real. The presence of the former had already been detected, while many of the enemy small craft were in all probability carrying mines, and our ships were necessarily crossing the track of these craft if they continued to chase. Besides which, the enemy, with their tactical skill, might well have been enticing our force into some prearranged mine or submarine danger.

It was about noon that the Blücher had been sunk and the main action broken off. As a finale, a Zeppelin dropped bombs on our flotillas who were picking up German survivors.



THE INDIAN ARMY, TOO, PAID ITS HEAVY TOLL

On a typical poplar-lined road of France a convoy of ambulances of the Indian Army is bringing the wounded back on their way to the base hospital and is passing on the road a transport column advancing to the front. The Indian troops were doughty fighters, as they proved in the action of Wytschaete and the battle of Neuve Chapelle. In page 309 is a photograph of the memorial to nearly 5,000 men of the Indian Army killed in action.

L.N.A.



THAT CHRISTMAS FEELING AT THE FRONT

British soldiers making merry on Christmas Day found in the apple orchards of France plenty of one necessity for a real Christmas—mistletoe. Left, a sprig is triumphantly waved by a Tommy astride a captured German gun, while below a young soldier is putting his to its legitimate use —to cover a salute to "Madame."

Photos, L.N.A.





DEATH AWAITS THE FOE UNWARY

Distance and a brief lull in the interchange of fire led many an incautious man to come momentarily from the safety of cover in the line to fall a victim of the crafty sniper. In this photograph two men of the Royal Berks Regiment are shown engaged in sniping work, the sniper with his rifle at the ready above, and the observer below. The scene was enacted within a shattered building at Anton's Farm, near Ploegsteert Wood, in the spring of 191[illegible]

Imperial War Museum



WHEN WINTER CAME TO FLANDERS FIELDS

Left are members of the H.A.C. in a trench at Lindenhoek in February 1915. For the moment the enemy guns are silent, and pipes and hot coffee are very comforting in the chill air of winter. Below are Territorials entraining for the front, with a stray dog that they have adopted. They are wearing the sheepskin coats that were not much used after the winter of 1914–15, for though they were comfortable in frosty weather, in wet weather they soon became sodden with rain and were but an encumbrance.

Imperial War Museum and L.N.A.



WHAT HAPPENED to ME at 'PLUG STREET'

by Rifleman Aubrey Smith, M.M.

QUITE early in the war drafts to the fighting regiments were sometimes allowed to make their acquaintance with the front line by easy stages. Rifleman Aubrey Smith of the London Rifle Brigade spent his first days in a barn near Ploegsteert ('Plug Street') on fatigue duty. He survived four years of the war, and in simple telling language recorded his day to day adventures. The bewildered recruit was to become the hardened veteran, but here the wonder of new impressions is set down with an observer's genius. The scene opens at Ploegsteert on February 4, 1915



HE TWICE WON THE M.M.

The gallant young rifleman who so graphically describes his experiences at "Plug Street" in February 1915, was awarded the Military Medal in August 1917 and a bar to the medal in November 1918. This photograph was taken just after he had received the second decoration.

C. J. Summerfield

LAST night [Feb. 3, 1915] we came to a barn, about three-quarters of a mile from the trenches, and I found myself billeted in a loft. After dark our section had to take up rations to a support-farm nearer the trenches. It was very dark, and it is marvellous that anyone can remember the route. Leaving a lane, we turned into a field (needless to say that all the way we trod in very thick mud) and sloshed along beside a wide ditch of water, which was the only thing I could see, except the outline of the man in front. Can't you picture it? Field after field separated by ditches; occasionally we cross a small stream boarded by a couple of planks, and the party slows up to allow all to cross over; then on again. We turn to the left and tread through some water, but a flare goes up on the horizon and we are able to pick our way for a few seconds.

A MUDDY field, all glistening with water, and the outlines of short, stumpy trees are visible against the sky. We spot a narrow brick path, which we follow, and presently have to jump a stream. One man stumbles and the party has to wait for him; another, overburdened with a rather heavy sack, calls out "losing touch," and the pace is shortened. My package is a sack and a huge piece of bacon tied on top, which nestles confidingly against my neck and hair and makes me feel I am not alone.

Soon we tread a very muddy turnip field and have to duck a piece of wire overhead, which the first man discovered at the price of his hat. It is very interesting and weird and the flares serve to make it still more unusual. The flares go up frequently, sometimes three at a time. A few bullets whistle over our heads, but, strangely enough, we don't seem to notice them. At last we approach our destination—a dark farm.

We tread a cinder-path leading up to it and enter to see a platoon of men comfortably settled down there on straw, with a nice blazing fire. After depositing our loads we turn back, and, by this time, having grown more accustomed to the light, are able to see something of our path. I find that what I had taken to be a ditch of water, which I carefully avoided, is really a wet path,



WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE!

The heavy rains that deluged the countryside of Flanders in the autumn and winter of 1914–15 added terribly to the misery and discomfort of the troops, as this chapter suggests. This photograph shows a man of the 2nd Scots Fusiliers near La Boutillerie doing his best to drain a flooded reserve trench with an improvised pump.

Imperial War Museum

and that a muddy bridge I had so gingerly trodden is several feet wide.

We arrived back and went to bed on straw, only to be awakened and told to put all equipment on and go to sleep in that attire. There have been a few shells flying overhead today and falling on some position far in our rear, and the noise does not seem at all alarming. It is a swishing sort of sound, ending in a huge explosion.

Some of our guns are quite near us, replying to the German fire.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

I HAD to go up to our trenches last night [Feb. 5] with a party who were carrying provisions, sandbags, etc. We halted at a little inn to get some of the things, and it was really funny to see the proprietor carrying on his business within a few hundred yards of the trenches, selling coffee and beer to the troops, with an incessant "pop-pop" of rifle fire going on outside." (Months afterwards we heard he had been shot as a spy, having had a secret telephone connected with the German lines.)

At this estaminet, known as the "Demi Lune," the party of us waited for some time for further stores to be brought up by a transport wagon. My bundle was a packet of a hundred sandbags, which was as much as I could manage, as they were loose and kept slipping. We advanced in single file up the lane, where the mud was not too terrible if you kept right in the middle. Presently my load began to drop in portions, and I had to keep picking the muddy sandbags up and shouldering them again, so that I got left behind. My discomfiture was increased by the amount of rifle fire that was going on, and the bullets kept hitting trees and walls by the wayside with as loud a crack as the shooting of them makes.

The flares seemed very close now, and I had not the least idea where to go. Fortunately, another of our men came along and helped me put my bundle together; he knew the way and told me the places where it was necessary to duck down. He said it was an unpleasant road for casualties from stray bullets, and I was very glad to be able to dump my load for a moment behind a barricade.

IT is very nice listening to the British guns, which are very active round here. Now I understand all that is implied when the bulletins say that "Artillery duels have taken place." German aeroplanes come along occasionally and get fired at. You may see several puffs of smoke in the air, but in order to detect the aeroplane you have to look about a mile away and half a mile higher. The guns on both sides don't seem to get the range in the air very easily. If the airman succeeds in locating the position of the guns we get shells whizzing over us intended for our batteries. Yesterday these shells fell in Ploegsteert and in the fields around, but the British did not reply much. Today our artillery has been very busy, without any reply so far from the enemy.

The firing-line is so different from my conception of it. The entire countryside is quite flat, consisting of green or ploughed fields, with groups of trees in the distance and lines of willows between the fields. Here and there are farmhouses, thatched cottages and small houses, and with the sun shining the panorama is a very placid and peaceful one. Except for the noise of firing and the "pop-pop" of the rifles, we might be in Kent!

This is the third day [Feb. 8, 1915] of our stay in billets [in Ploegsteert]. Sergt. (now Corpl.) Fulkes, Cox, Sweeting, Gernat and I are in a house in the village and have the front room to ourselves for sleeping and eating, and the people are very obliging. Fulkes and I speak French sufficiently to ask for all our wants. We have not been posted to our sections again yet, so Corpl. Miles and the others are in a billet farther down the street.

JUST LIKE HOME!

WHAT an absolute treat to sit down at a table again for a meal! We have our food cooked by the "landlady," who also makes tea and provides milk and won't hear of us using our enamelled plates and mugs or even our own knives and forks! No, she provides crockery and cutlery and washes up afterwards, and we feel quite at home. When back in civilized surroundings it is very funny how a hair on our plates worries us, whereas we swallowed all manner of things in the barn. We are most particular now about clean knives, and the butter we bought, which was so perfect in the barn, is recognized as white lard when surrounded by "tea-things."

The Army food is good and rations are plentiful; we can also buy almost anything in the village, but the "boutons noirs" have a reputation for possessing money and the shopkeepers charge them much more than they do the Regulars.

We marched [to Nieppe] to the baths yesterday, which we were very glad to have. They consist of huge tubs of hot water to hold about twelve men, and you have to drop down some distance from the top of the tubs to the water. We got a complete set of clean underclothing, which did not necessarily fit us, and I changed mine with a big fat man who was in rather a fix. While we were in the baths our uniforms were "baked" in a kind of oven to disinfest them. On returning here, I went round with Wood to a deserted village school and played the piano for about half an hour; it *was* such a pleasure to touch one again.

LAST night Wood's landlady had made a fine boiled roly-poly jam pudding, and I asked the good wench at our billet to make one. Being of the peasant class, she had never made such a thing before and all signs and explanations were useless, as our French was not advanced enough to describe the recipe. Fulkes and I pointed to bread and pretended to roll out dough and spread jam and threw the imaginary pudding at the oven, but the woman only laughed.

BREASTWORKS ABOVE THE WATER

I HAVE only been on guard once. On that occasion one nervous sentry thought he saw something move, which was really a harmless dust-heap, and called us all out (the guard, I mean). It was rather exciting and we didn't grumble. The only person who grumbled was a man who had had some rum before retiring to bed and, on the command "Guard, turn out!" thought he was part of the guard and turned out with them! When we had gone some distance, he realized that it was a day or two before that he had been on guard.

This is my third day in the front-line breastworks, having left billets on the evening of the 9th, and we shall be relieved tonight. We came up by the lane past the "Demi Lune" estaminet which I described before, and, having got to the front-line trenches, filed along to the left until we got to some breastworks.

THE trench is so full of water here that these breastworks have been built on the ground. Ours is a long low bivvy, not very much above ground-level, made of sandbags, planks and earth, and well covered. It is divided into three compartments, each holding three men, or a portion of them—for our feet stick out in the open and the space is very limited.

We are in a big field and our trenches are on one side; to the right they are manned by our company for some few hundred yards and then the Essex Regiment continues the line onwards in the direction of Armentières. To our left is another breastwork, manned by our platoon, and beyond them there is



'VERY NICE TO LISTEN TO'

This remarkable photograph shows a British 60-pounder gun the instant after it had been fired, while it is at full recoil. Its deep boom would be most welcome to the men of whom the battery is in support, for as Rifleman Aubrey Smith says in this chapter, "It was very nice listening to the British guns." The 60-pounder was heavier than the guns of the Field Artillery, but sufficiently mobile to be moved up in support of infantry.
Imperial War Museum

a considerable space before the East Lancs trench begins at the outskirts of Le Gheer. Three hundred yards away is the German trench, which we observe through a periscope. The field itself is a mass of wet brown mud, without anything growing, but with thousands of cans and empty tins thrown about near the trenches.

All we do is to cook meals, read, write and keep guard. We start off with a sip of rum to warm us and then cook bacon as best we may on an improvised barrier deposited on a duck-board path behind our breastwork.

Everything is done under difficulties, as we have to keep very low to avoid being seen, and from morn to night we are unable to straighten ourselves.

The Germans appear to have superiority of fire, as regards musketry, in this part of the line. They have snipers posted and plenty of loopholes and keep up a constant fire all day long. "Ping-ping" we hear continually as they hit one object or another in the vicinity. It seems to be the aim of one sniper to reduce a certain house to ruins, as he keeps chipping off pieces of brick.

As for us, we keep silent. As far as I can see, the whole British line keeps silent and treats them with contempt. As a matter of fact, it would be difficult to reply if we wanted to, as we haven't any loopholes and it would be madness to stand up and fire over the top. But the sniping doesn't do any good, except in so far as it forces us to lie low. At night time, unfortunately, he may work mischief, as the man on sentry-duty has to stand up for two hours and peer into the darkness.

. . . . . .

On being relieved on the night of February 12, we made our way gaily down the Demi Lune Road, where a wagon was waiting to take our packs. Then we tramped along to the billets in Armentières. . . . That night we were awakened at midnight and had to put our kit together ready to move. Fortunately the whole thing was a false alarm.

This seems like a big military town in England, and the appearance of a French soldier is, of course, a rarity. The thing that strikes you most is the enormous number of motor lorries driven by the A.S.C. There is a long, straight road (from Nieppe) by these billets and sometimes the convoys extend as far as the eye can see and continue to pass for a few minutes. Then you will see a company of very spick and span troops, who are obviously new arrivals, and there will be an almost unending line of horses being taken out for exercise in the other direction. In the streets you will see Hay's Wharf wagons, County Council conveyances, etc., and everything seems to be connected with the Army. "To the Follies," "A Cock Fight will be held in this Estaminet," etc., meet the eye, and menus are exhibited in more or less faulty English in some of the estaminets. . . .

WE are billeted in Ploegsteert [Feb. 22] again now and go in the trenches tonight. I must tell you about a digging fatigue we had on the 16th, when we were in the support farm again. Now that the mud is removed from my coat and trousers I can relate it without bad language. We arrived in the field of mud in which the front-line trench is situated about 8.30 p.m., having carried planks of wood up there from the estaminet. The night was dark, but we had to





'PLUG STREET' MEANS 'MUD' TO MANY WHO REMEMBER IT

"*Some* mud," the late Aubrey Smith of the London Rifle Brigade comments ruefully in his lively reminiscences in these pages. Left, a British officer resists the slime with stout gum-boots and layers of straw. Even cold water for a trench shave (above) was muddy; and below, a water-logged trench is laboriously baled out.

Imperial War Museum and Photopress



BATH NIGHT CAME BUT ONCE A MONTH IN MUDDY FLANDERS

"Hard-bitten" describes these men in more than one sense, for the first and most important stage in Tommy's toilet was "delousing," one of the less savoury words added to the common vocabulary during the war. The right-hand photo shows a blanket-baking machine in which bedclothes and uniforms are being disinfected. Meanwhile their owners, men of the 1/6th Battalion South Staffs Regiment (seen below), enjoy that rare luxury, a communal hot bath, in an old cart lined with tarpaulins. The water has been heated in biscuit tins.

Photos, L.N.A. and Imperial War Museum







FROM THAMESIDE TO YPRES

At the outbreak of war the transport of the British Expeditionary Force was inadequate, and lorries and vans of all kinds were commandeered. Here is a scene, such as Rifleman Smith describes in page 301, on the Ypres-Poperinghe road in October 1914 during the first battle of Ypres. A row of lorries which three months before were trundling along the streets of London are now in the maelstrom of war carrying supplies from railhead to the line.

Photo by C. Pilkington in the Imperial War Museum

stoop all the time, as we were working in the rear of the trench, filling sandbags, and if a flare went up we had to crouch right down in the mud.

Sandbags have to be filled with mud and water and, in the dark, the operation is a very awkward one, for half of each spadeful misses the bag and pours down the puttees and boots of the person holding it. The mud you stand in comes nearly to the top of the boots and is much deeper in places. We all wore our mackintosh capes, which are very spacious and reach almost to our feet, and, as we perpetually stooped, we kept tripping up and treading on the capes, which were soon as muddy inside as out. When I had dug a small hole it enabled me to sit in the mud and put my feet and legs in the hole. After a number of bags were filled we had to carry them a distance of 150 yards to an emplacement on the right, stooping and wading through the slosh; we trod on turnips and slid off them, our feet turning right over in the mud, sometimes tripping up. This is all very well until a flare goes up.

THEN you instantly flop down flat in the slosh and crouch for about twenty seconds. On you go again, stooping and treading on the mac, falling over turnips; another flare, another flop; then you feel yourself slipping and find yourself in a shell hole, knee-deep in mud and water, sprawling about against the slimy sides. Several swear words follow, and you try to get out, but become tied up in the cape.

I fell in such a hole twice, and to put my hand anywhere on boots, puttees or trousers was to get it as slimy and dripping as when I sprawled in the mud. We left off the task at 11.30 and went to bed about half-past-midnight, very glad to rest our backs after the stooping. One man wearing waders or gum-boots had been digging for half an hour and found he had absolutely stuck in the mud and couldn't get out. The only way out was to withdraw his feet, stand on a bank in his socks and tug at the boots with his hands. But even this was too much for him, and another man had to come up and, with gloves on, they tore away the mud from the boots and eventually freed them. But this time the man who had come to the rescue found he had stuck and he also had to get out of his boots and dig them out. *Some* mud! . . .



DEATH'S TOLL AT PLOEGSTEERT WOOD

During the earlier years of the war the graves of those who fell in action were only marked by a rough cross. Then specially designed crosses were erected, and finally came the uniform headstones such as those seen above at Underhill Farm, close to Ploegsteert Wood. Right, are some of the later wooden crosses.

One of these marks the grave of Captain the Hon. R. G. Morgan Grenville, who fell while leading a company of the Rifle Brigade at Ploegsteert Wood on December 19, 1914. His second in command, Captain the Hon. F. R. D. Prittie, took his place, but was also killed. They were buried side by side. Captain Morgan Grenville's body was later re-interred at Rifle House Cemetery, Warneton. Below, near a deserted farmhouse, close to Ploegsteert Wood, are some of the earlier wooden crosses.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd., and Photopress





TERRIER'S FIRST BLOOD in SODDEN FIELDS

by William Linton Andrews

THE author of this narrative was on the staff of the 'Dundee Advertiser' at the outbreak of war. He joined the 4th Territorial Battalion of the Black Watch. Magnificently does he describe the sensations of himself and his civilian chums when going with the Bareilly Brigade of the Meerut Division into the holocaust of Neuve Chapelle, their first taste of battle. Mr. Linton Andrews continued his journalistic career after the war and became editor of the 'Leeds Mercury'



HE WAS THERE IN 1915

The writer of this chapter served for three years in France and survived. In the foreword to his book he says that he wanted not to forget war but to remember his great-hearted comrades.

Photo, 'Leeds Mercury'

WE felt honoured to think we had been chosen to serve in battle. Some of those who did not go to France till much later may think I am writing just the conventional journalistic phrase of the period. But no; we were eager to fight, to prove ourselves comrades and helpers to the Old Contemptibles, of whom we had heard so glorious a record, and our regular friends of the Indian Army. We were smarting to avenge the things said to us and to show that even a man with hairs on his chin might have no spot on his military record. We were eager to live up to the reputation of our famous regiment.

Later, before going into a charge, we generally shook hands and promised each other that the survivors would send messages to the bereaved. But nothing so mournful was in our mood then. We were excited and eager to do that for which we had joined the Army, our sworn duty. Moreover, there was the thrilling anticipation of being in at the great final victory of the war.

VAIN hope! Vain, ridiculous hope, as we see it now! In those days we thought we had but to break through the German front and the enemy, short of men, would crumple up. This was not the mere ignorant opinion of raw Territorial privates. It was the professed hope of the Army Commander. General Sir Douglas Haig, who, in a special order dated March 9, said:

TO THE 1ST ARMY

We are about to engage the enemy under very favourable conditions. Until now in the present campaign the British Army has, by its pluck and determination, gained victories against an enemy greatly superior in men and guns.

Reinforcements have made us stronger than the enemy in our front. Our guns are now more numerous than the enemy's are, and are also larger than any hitherto used by any army in the field. Our Flying Corps has driven the enemy from the air.

We are now about to attack with about forty-eight battalions a locality in that front which is held by some three German battalions. It seems probable, also, that for the first day of the operations the Germans will not have more than four battalions available for the counter-attack. Quickness of movement is therefore of first importance to enable us to forestall the enemy and thereby gain success without severe loss.

At no time in the war has there been a more favourable moment for us, and I feel confident of success. The extent of that success must depend on the rapidity and determination with which we advance.

To ensure success each one of us must play his part and fight like men for the honour of Old England.

We studied the message. "Three cheers!" said Nick. "We've done with trenches!"

"Yes, if we break through and get them on the run, and don't let them stop," said I sagely.

IT SEEMED SO SIMPLE!

WE thought we saw it clearly. It was all so simple. We were to make a surprise attack with a battering-ram of men and guns, and once we had thrust it through the trench system the foe would be rolled up. Yes, rolled up. It was a favourite phrase then.

Later battles were more mysterious, and the private rarely knew what was happening except in his own bit of battlefield. He and a chum might get stuck in a reeking pit for a whole day and night and not know whether friend or foe was in that smashed trench fifty yards away. But we had a good idea at Neuve Chapelle of what we were after.

For one thing, the field of battle was tiny. My recollections may be wrong, but I think we expected to make a gap of only two miles or so. We had a very fair idea of the ground to be covered. We Territorials, eager for our first battle, studied it as much as we could.

Neuve Chapelle, which gave the battle its name, was a little village with a church and a brewery. It was close to the main road that ran from Estaires, which was in our hands, to cross-roads made by the rue de Bois, where lay a dug-out position we called Port Arthur, then across to the German front line, and so on to La Bassée, which was occupied by the Germans. Neuve Chapelle had changed hands several times in the autumn, and was held by the Germans from the beginning of November throughout the winter, making an awkward dent in our front line. Behind Neuve Chapelle, as we faced the enemy, lay a little wood, the Bois du Biez. The ground slowly rose towards the village of Aubers, and about nine miles beyond was the great city of Lille. Our object was to straighten out the salient, get to the high ground, especially at Aubers Ridge, and there command the approaches to the important manufacturing towns of Lille, Roubaix and Tourcoing.

We were hopeful enough to believe that on the night of the battle there would be cosy billets for us in Lille.

BUT even raw Territorials could see our task was none too easy. Our trenches were only for temporary shelter. We never meant to settle in them. The enemy had made fortifications of his, with places in which to sleep in comfort. Moreover, a battered village like Neuve Chapelle would be made extremely strong with sandbag protections. We had seen that already at Richebourg, where we laughed at the shells falling around our billets.

Then we should have to fight our way across fields so sodden with winter rains that they were like morasses. Before the battle we had to throw bridges across drains and watercourses in order to enable a concentration of troops to be made quickly. Communication breast-

works were made, for communication trenches would quickly have filled with water. We dragged our way up with ammunition, bombs, rations, sandbags, barbed wire, spare bridges, planks, hurdles, and pickets, and stored them at depots in the fields. Knowing the time it took to do this on our side of the line, what were we to expect when we crossed to the German fields with no multiplication of bridges to help us over the watery parts, and all our fighting material to be carried forward ?

As the day for the battle approached we looked skyward with the utmost anxiety. It would be impossible to conceal our preparations from German airmen. Fortunately for us our own airmen were then extremely powerful. They challenged the German planes, and it was obvious even to a simple private that we had command of the air in that section for the time being.

The battle plans, of course, were not revealed to humble people like myself, then a lance-corporal. Men of this rank, the one just above that of private, were not in the confidence of majors. let alone major-generals. But it was clear to me from the lie of the land, from the assembly of ammunition and engineering material, and from the hope of getting to Lille, that we were in for a tremendous, shattering struggle. True, before we had Haig's message, one of the writer-fighters of our little group said it would be only a small biff, never mentioned in the papers. He said such attacks were constantly being made, and nothing was said about them. Joe Lee, Nick and I all held the big battle theory. We were convinced this was the battle that might end the war.

Not that we had much time for conversation in those days. We had become sweating coolies. We were carrying all through the hours of darkness, every night. How we came to loathe the sodden tracks, with wire overhead, wire underfoot, every few yards ! We had always to carry our rifles and ammunition with us, not because there was any danger of our being suddenly attacked, but because that is the military way. We should have been more useful without them, but no, that was against the military code.

So the day came, and still the enemy, as far as we could see, was blind to our battle preparations. We might be raw, but we were keen, intelligent men, all volunteers. The wasters and the criminals had been kicked out of the battalion or deserted in Scotland. We meant to do our best for the honour of the Black Watch, the pride of Dundee. We felt that loving eyes at home were upon us. Bewilderments were to come, but not yet the bleak misery, the all-but suicidal desolations of the Somme and Passchendaele.

HARVEST HOME ON A BATTLEFIELD

Headquarters were sometimes found in strange places in the course of a battle. Here during the battle of Neuve Chapelle, March 10–14, 1915, the headquarters of the 21st Brigade have been pitched temporarily in a farmyard. A brick building would be a clear mark for enemy gunners, and a rick, relic of last year's harvest, serves as a temporary shelter. The "dug-out," made by removing some of the straw, has at least the merit of comfort and warmth, dangerous as it would be if shelling began.

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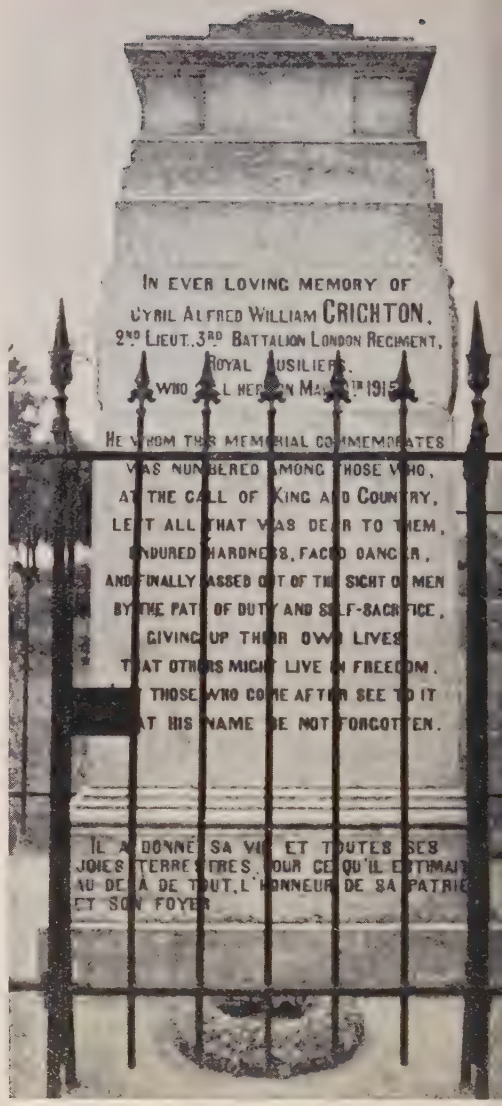
It was the night of March 9, 1915. Snow swept down upon us in the flooded trenches near Neuve Chapelle. We grew colder and colder. I never thought I could be so chilled and still live. It was a biting torture for the body.

We could hardly drag our feet along when orders came to move from the trench to the Port Arthur dug-outs, there to snatch a few hours' sleep before we began battle.

At 5 a.m. my platoon comrades and I were routed out to move to a reserve trench. We shambled over ground hardened with frost. It was colder than ever.

We called it a trench, but it was nothing like the fortified cuttings that became familiar later. It was more of a breastwork, a stockade strengthened with sandbags of earth. Joe Lee, Nicholson, and I were together, sitting close to each other, backs to the stockade. Dawn came, and we peered across at the German lines, wondering if Jerry knew we were coming.

At 7 a.m. a German flew out of a low-lying cloud, swooped over Port Arthur, and after coming down to three or four hundred feet, whence he must have been able to see our crowded lines, he raced back. Now we were for it. German guns began, but directed their fire against the Port Arthur trenches, which we had left. Except for our usual morning hate with registering guns at dawn, the British artillery held its fire until 7.30 a.m. Then began, after a single shot that appeared to be a signal, the hell fury of bombardment from 480 guns and howitzers. The noise almost split our numbed wits. As the shells went over our heads we grew more and more excited. We could not hear each



SITE OF A SALIENT HEROICALLY HELD

The photograph below shows the site of the salient known as Port Arthur, mentioned in page 306, where British soldiers once sheltered from shell-fire after the line at Neuve Chapelle had been broken. It is now occupied by a café, appropriately called "Auberge de la Bombe," while "Port Arthur" is commemorated in the inscription by the date "10 Mars 1915," over the door. Just opposite the café stands the memorial (right), one of the very few erected in France to the memory of an individual officer. Second-Lieutenant Crichton, whom it commemorates, is known to have been killed near this spot.

Photos, W. A. Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.



other. Shots from the eighteen pounders were screaming not far over our heads, and much higher up, higher than the highest mountain of Europe, high explosives from the 15-inch howitzers were rushing like express trains. After a while we could trace the different sounds.

There was no difficulty in making out the German trenches. They had become long clouds of smoke and dust, flashing continuously with shell-bursts, and with enormous masses of trench material and bodies sailing high above the smoke cloud. The purely physical effect on us was one of extreme exhilaration. We could have laughed and cried with excitement. We thought that bombardment was winning the war before our eyes. Incredible that the men in the German front line could have escaped. We felt sure we were going to pour through the gap.

VAIN HOPES OF VICTORY

LOOKING towards the village of Neuve Chapelle we saw the houses terribly battered, but not crumbled away as we expected. We thought the German artillery must have been swept out of existence. Vain hope. Counter fire opened upon us.

"They are shelling our fellows," Nicholson exclaimed, in extreme surprise. They were, indeed. We looked along the breastwork and saw, about 300 yards away, shrapnel plumping among our Black Watch Terriers. Stretcher-bearers ran along the line. Shell after shell came over, each about ten yards nearer Nicholson and myself. But a few minutes and our turn would come. We had no thought of escape. We had to lie and wait while the punctual shells worked along the line. "This looks like the end," said Nick.

On my right lay a young architect, Douglas Bruce, who had crept up to us for warmth. "Och," he said, "if we're for it we're for it."

It was the nearest we had yet been to death, and we were surprised at our calm. (We had then seen little killing at close quarters.)



TO INDIA'S UNFORGOTTEN MEN

This impressive war memorial commemorates the Indian soldiers who fell at Neuve Chapelle and elsewhere in France. It stands in the corner of the battlefield known as "Pioneer Keep." The column is 50 feet high and, besides the names of 4,847 dead, battle honours, and the dedicatory inscription, it bears the words "God is One, His is the Victory," with similar texts in Arabic, Hindi and Gurmukhi.

Photo, W. A. Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.

DEATH was ruling a straight line along our trench. Crash! Crash! Crash! Our turn was coming. Now the line was veering slightly beyond our trench. The shells were falling five yards behind the breastwork, six yards, seven yards, eight yards.

"The next one's ours," said Nick. "Good luck, Linton." We shook hands. We wormed as low as we could. The shell came screaming. It burst ten yards away with a great gnashing roar. Earth drenched us. There was a cry of astonishment and pain at my side, while yet the up-thrown earth was falling.

"Damn them!" said Douglas Bruce very heartily. His mouth was bleeding. He had had a whack on the jaw, and a tooth had been knocked out. He took it calmly.

"Stretcher-bearers," we cried, and a man crept up and did what he could.

The shrapnel passed along the line, growing more and more harmless as it fell farther behind the trench. Then it stopped, all was quiet, and a lark sang. Bruce started to walk with bloody jaw on the first stage of a journey that was to take him back to Scotland.

An order came shouted along: "4th Black Watch, move to the left in single file."

It was 11 a.m. The village of Neuve Chapelle had been taken with the bayonet, and we were ordered to move forward to the captured German trenches. We passed many Indian



WHEN THE GERMAN GUNS HAD THE BEST OF IT

The battle of Neuve Chapelle brought home to Sir John French the terrible shortage of munitions in the British Army compared with the German Army. The photograph shows shells of the German barrage bursting close behind the British front line trenches to prevent reinforcements being brought up—and there could be no effective reply. The Indian Corps and the IV Corps were ordered to "push through the barrage of fire regardless of cost." "We passed many Indian dead," says Mr. Linton Andrews in this chapter; they numbered in the end nearly 5,000.

Imperial War Museum

dead and stinking shell-pits on the way. There was a point at which we had to jump a ditch. As we jumped we were in full view of the Germans. They were a longish way off, but now and then hit a man as he jumped. Our company commander, Captain Boase, on the other side of the ditch, called on us to hurry. We were bunching slightly as men hesitated to jump. I remember four in front of me. The first ran as fast as he could, and jumped high. Crack! He was wounded slightly, but carried on. Then a little stumpy fellow, as he jumped, was shot dead, his knees sagging as he fell. The next man, oldish and heavy, just flopped into the ditch itself and scrambled out unhurt. Then Nicholson rushed it safely.

Now for it. I took a good run, aimed to jump high, tucked my legs under me, then thrust them forward for the landing, just as though I were jumping for Peele B House at my old school, Christ's Hospital. Bullets whistled past, but all was well.

Curious that that jump stands out so clearly in my memory. I cannot think what happened next, except that there seemed to be more and more fire, and the situation was more and more confused, and the stench of the shell-pits stung the nostrils.

I remember seeing one of our men flop before a heavy shell-burst. He rose covered with earth, and made towards me white with passion, his eyes rolling. "This is madness!" he cried. "The world's gone mad. Why don't you stop it?"

"Wish I could," I said.

"It's murder," he went on. "Why don't the papers stop it?"

I spoke soothingly, but he said the same things over and over again, and went off raging.

I remembered being stationed with my section, probably after some hours, to guard a pump at a brewery. As we moved to it we passed a notice-board still standing with the word "Danger." Nicholson laughed as if it were the greatest joke of the war. By this time I was too tired to laugh. I was stupid with fatigue, cold, and strain.

THE CRUCIFIX OF THE TRENCHES

Many soldiers who fought at Neuve Chapelle remember the famous crucifix, which stood throughout the tornado of fire of the battle. The photograph below shows the scene in that part of the village known as Crucifix Corner, just after the battle where amid the wrack of war the crucifix stands out against the sky. Later it was taken into the trenches, where it was damaged, but never destroyed. A replica of it, seen right, has now been set up near Neuve Chapelle, and the remains of the original figure of Christ rest beneath it. The crucifix bears the inscription: "Christ of the Trenches 1915–1918, restored by the Bocquet family."

Photos, Imperial War Museum
and
W. A. Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.





HEARTBREAK BATTLE:

Or the Horror of Neuve Chapelle

by Wilfred Ewart

WILFRED EWART must always be remembered as one of the great war writers. He joined his regiment, the Scots Guards, in France in February 1915, and within a few weeks was plunged into the ghastly battle of Neuve Chapelle, a heartbreaking and costly failure. He survived the war, entered upon a distinguished literary career, and met his death in 1923 by a chance shot during a fiesta in Mexico City. His account of Neuve Chapelle is a masterpiece of descriptive prose

SEVEN o'clock approaches. Word comes that the attack on the right has been launched. Word is passed down to get ready. Officers load their revolvers and button their tunics across the throat. Platoons are marshalled together and told off. "Fix bayonets!" A cold, rasping sound, and six hundred blades flash in the morning sunlight.

"Move to the right in file!" "Right turn!" "Quick march!" The orders follow each other in quick succession. Number one company leads the way along the shell-stricken road. A lane branches off to the left; abutting upon it is a maze of deep, disused trenches. The commanding officer and adjutant are here, uttering last words of encouragement to the men as they file into them. Knee-deep in mud and water they are, with planks laid along the bottom here and there to afford a better footing. At the end of the winding passages we halt, awaiting the final word. The order, when it comes, is short and simple: "Advance 95 degrees left."

Company officers blow their whistles and the whole front line swarms through the gaps in the sandbag breastwork and rushes pell-mell across a hundred yards of open ground, pitted with holes and obstructed with loose strands of barbed wire.

Directly we get out in the open we come under very heavy rifle-fire and shrapnel. Bullets sing and splutter merrily in all directions. Once across that open stretch we are in the first line of German trenches. Already they have been reversed by our infantry, though the trench is shallow and the breastwork low. Indeed, the crush of troops in this section is altogether too great.

FORWARD TO WHAT DESTINY?

In the cold light of a March morning in 1915 thousands of British soldiers moved forward to grapple with the enemy at Neuve Chapelle. Among the troops engaged were the 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers, here seen advancing to their assembly position. How calamitous this frightful battle was for the British infantry is described with moving realism in this chapter written by one who was in the midst of the tragedy.

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MEN cannot obtain shelter from the ceaseless stream of bullets. Some even have to crouch down on the top of the ground. A strapping fellow topples forward groaning into the trench, his hands clasped to his forehead, from which the blood pours. Another rolls quietly over on his side stone dead. The lad next to me, virile and strong a moment ago, now lies feebly moaning, shot through the body. Two or three others, variously wounded, sit, half-conscious, with their backs against the parapet.

And we have been out only five minutes!

We can only advance in short rushes, taking cover wherever possible, and it is impossible to keep the formation. We are about half a mile west of Neuve Chapelle, and the country is absolutely open, only slight depressions here and there.

IT is time for another rush. Up we clamber again, dive one by one under a loose strand of wire and stream diagonally in batches across an enclosure, men following officers as best they can. The air whistles—nay, tingles—with bullets, and it is with a feeling more of surprise than anything that after each rush one reaches the other side. We find another breastwork similarly crowded with men but better protected than the last. For the ground in front has been blown into a huge mound by the action of the British shells, and this provides adequate shelter. The mound must be at least forty feet high.



NEUVE CHAPELLE AFTER THE 'HEARTBREAK BATTLE'

The two photographs in this page show the complete devastation of Neuve Chapelle during the battle. Above is the village street in March 1915 after it had been taken by the 25th Brigade, 8th Division. Below is a homestead on the outskirts completely smashed, while the crucifix behind it, seen also in page 311, still stands.

Photos, Imperial War Museum



Beneath it the soil had been hollowed and scarred and rent into a great cavity—a pit of horror indescribable. Here in some vast explosion all the refuse, all the material of the neighbouring trenches seem to have fallen. Many German dead are there, grey and bloody, amid the upturned earth ; by itself lies the body of a British soldier, stark and stiff, the face covered, doubtless by some comrade's hand, with a piece of white tarpaulin ; the trivial things of life are there—biscuit-tins, scraps of food, hand-mirrors, the trivial things men carry in their pockets

And everywhere litter of equipment : German helmets, with the golden eagle emblazoned on the front, German caps and accoutrements, rifles, clips of cartridges, pistols, and weapons of all kinds. The tradition of blood and iron has found its fitting consummation in this one place.

Through this pit we clamber and up the mound beyond ; then dart along a kind of ridge. A small river or large ditch of stagnant water is bridged at one place by a plank which has broken down. It is no time to hesitate. The only thing to do is to plunge in and somehow stagger across with the filthy, brackish, greenish water lapping one's chin. Rifle and bayonet, already clogged with mud, are useless. On the farther bank lies a wounded Grenadier officer attended by his sergeant.

THE country is now dead flat and open, the enemy cannot be more than three hundred yards distant. A broad stretch of ploughed field, heavy with recent rains, has to be crossed. Men fall right and left, prostrate khaki figures dot the ground in all directions. The crackle of rifle-fire freshens, the whole air hums with bullets. Burdened with our packs and weight of equipment, we can only muster a jog-trot in such heavy going. Many prefer to crawl over the ground on all fours, though this little advantages them ; some pause for breath in the shell-holes, others lie down in the open.

HOURS OF HELL FIRE

ON the far side of the ploughed field is a shallow depression in the ground. Here, the only available cover, are disposed a number of troops of various companies and regiments. Immediately in front, not one hundred and fifty yards away, is a group of buildings surmounted by a tall, red-brick chimney —a landmark in all that countryside—known as the Moulin du Piètre. It looks more like a mine in one of our own colliery districts than a mill. It fairly bristles with rifles and machine-guns. The hail of bullets above our heads increases. We flatten our faces in the muddy ground and lie there for three solid hours under a hell fire that seems to come from every side but one. Shrapnel bursts as regularly as clockwork within twenty or thirty yards and scatters earth over one every time.

Behind us the rear companies of the battalion are still advancing. They come on in groups and batches in widely extended order. Meanwhile, we lie down in a long, irregular line which grows thicker, thus affording a better mark for the enemy's riflemen and artillery. So, presently the order comes for two platoons to advance about a hundred yards to a line of temporary breastworks and join the Grenadiers who are ahead. We show our heads and the bullets begin to fly as thick as hail.

DREAD DIN OF BATTLE

I HAD hardly got to my feet and was jumping over a ditch when I was hit in the left leg and took an unceremonious toss down the bank. It hurt a bit for a time, but Warner and Seymour (two fellow officers) were moving up with me, so there was no confusion among the men. Five minutes later Seymour, as I shortly afterwards learned, got a shrapnel bullet through the head and collapsed, but by then our tide had passed on, out of my sight. My thigh hurt me in such a way that I could not move for at least two hours. Nor, indeed, dare I do so. For in the mill and its group of adjacent buildings only that bare hundred and fifty yards away the enemy still swarmed.

So I lay on my face motionless, listening to the sounds of the battle. They were so numerous that I cannot enumerate them all. It was the shrapnel which caused the greatest dread. How narrowly it whizzed overhead, to burst about thirty yards behind with a deafening bang and a flash of fire followed by the sing-sing of many bullets which buried themselves in the ground. Surely none could escape ! The whole sky was dotted with the black smoke of high explosives and the yellow puffs of lyddite, each with its flash of flame. The air stank of powder and the fumes of sulphur.

MORE terrible—not to be forgotten—were the salvos of the German batteries close in front, which fired almost together every three minutes. Boom-boom-boom-boom—they threatened to burst the brain, they caused a racking headache, these terrible tornadoes of sound. The machine-gun and the rifle-fire were as nothing after these. The rat-tat-tat, the clack-clack, the ping-ping sent messages well overhead to the trenches behind and the still-advancing troops. Much other noise came to puzzle the ears, to weary the brain : the faint shouting of men, the clink-clink of the entrenching tools as soldiers dug themselves in, the great hollow explosions which resounded afar off amid the ruins of Aubers and Neuve Chapelle.

And the groans, the moans, the crying of those who lay around !

I STARTED to crawl back. The dressing-station was at least a mile away, but things seemed quieter. I crawled over the ground ever so slowly, for those riflemen in the mill were doubtless watching. The ploughed field seemed interminable—I could not see the breastwork on the other side, and the only landmarks were the dead and wounded men who lay at intervals along the direction of advance. Now the supports had ceased to come up. Yet suddenly, as happens in modern fighting, the combatants took inspiration, the battle burst forth afresh. One above another common shells and shrapnel exploded above and beside me, earth fell about my ears, bullets tingled past them. Flash after flash, as of lightning, dazzled my eyes. I was barely half-way across. Creeping into a deep shell-hole I flattened my face. Close behind the German howitzer double-battery boomed shatteringly. Close ahead the firing of our own guns was so swift, so furious, as to be one continuous roar. Also the rifle-fire freshened along the whole front—it was as though some great dry wood-pile had been newly kindled.

The air sang songs with the passage of the shells, the earth trembled under the detonation of such huge guns as had never been used before—shriek and roar, boom and bang and crackle.

For half an hour I lay there, in company with a dead man, thinking the end of all things had come.

BUT like some gust of human passion the holocaust spent itself at last. And I, leaving my Burberry, crawled on among the shell-pits and the relics of the soldiery, the rifles, the caps, and the helmets, the emptyings of pockets, the equipment and the haversacks, the wasted rounds of ammunition, the revolvers, and the scraps of food. Past many an upturned waxen face and shreds of men where shells had done their work—and blood.

I glance at the other figures as I creep by. They, too, are very peaceful, very quiet, very happy. Nearly all are Englishmen, and, looking at them, I realize that I am in the presence of a great fraternity of soldiers. Nothing shall disturb their rest again : neither shells, nor bullets, nor the call of duty.

In the sunny meadow beyond, a clergyman and two helpers have begun their work of burying the dead.



Photopress

HERE IN 1915 MEN FOUGHT, FED AND SLEPT

Here is a scene in a British trench in the winter of 1915. Death is perhaps not far distant for these men, for the German trenches are not many hundred yards away. A sniper looks over the parapet waiting for an enemy head to show, while on the other side an equally alert watch is kept for careless movement. But these men must eat even while death stalks them and, seated in the trench, a sergeant, tranquilly smoking his pipe, cooks over a bucket fire the best food he can get together. The front of the trench is revetted with boards held in place by saplings.



EVEN WAR HAD ITS HAPPY HOURS

Not all the memories of the war are charged with gruesome horror and tragedy, and every fighting man can recall incidents, such as that shown above, in which the hardship and strain of the warrior's life were mitigated for a while by good comradeship and fleeting, simple pleasures. Here is a cheerful party taking a meal and a spell of relaxation in the seclusion of a copse.



The photograph was taken in March 1915 when the men still cooked their own rations on improvised stoves. They belonged to a motor machine-gun unit, a force brought into being in February 1915. The temporary sanctuary in which they are seen was situated in front of Blauwe Poort Farm, south of Zillebeke lake. Such woods were soon obliterated by the torrent of shells that day and night the batteries poured forth.

Imperial War Museum



OFF-DUTY DITTIES AND TUNES OF THE TRENCHES

Spring 1915 saw men of the 2nd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (19th Brigade) at Bois Grenier. They are in a support trench, as the absence of a parados shows. Behind the man with the accordion can be seen the expanded metal revetment. As for the music, these Scots do not look too pleased with their accordion, which is surely the poorest substitute for the pipes. The weather is still chilly and most of the men are wearing stocking caps.

Imperial War Museum

AT the CRACK of DAWN

Air-Raiding Before Breakfast

by Flight-Lieut. Harold Rosher, R.N.A.S.

SOME of the most moving documents in the literature of the war were the simple, unstudied letters written home by officers and men who day after day were facing the imminent threat of death. Flight-Lieut. Harold Rosher was in the Naval branch of the air service. He was killed on February 27, 1916, when testing a machine at Dover. Earlier in the war he had taken part in several daring raids on German bases. It is fitting that a letter to his parents, written on March 24, 1915, should be reproduced in the precise words in which he wrote it—a tribute to a most gallant airman. The Editor of his war letters added to Mr. Rosher's own very modest account the official bulletins which were published at the time

No. 1 Squadron, R.N.A.S., B.E.F.,
March 24, 1915.

Dearest Mum and Dad,

Another successful little jaunt. Five of us were chosen to go: Capt. Courtney [Major Ivor T. Courtney, Squadron-Comdr., R.N.], Meates (who travelled up to town from Dover in the train with Dad), self, and two subs named Andreae and Huskisson. Courtney and I got there and back; Meates [B. C. Meates, Flt.-Lieut., R.N.] came down in Holland with engine trouble and is interned. . . . Andreae [P. G. Andreae, Flt.-Lieut., R.N.] lost his way in the clouds and fog and came back; and Huskisson [B. L. Huskisson, Flt.-Comdr., R.N.] did the same, only dropped his bombs on Ostend on the way. Our mark, by the way, was the submarine base at Hoboken, near Antwerp.

Yesterday morning we were to have gone, but the weather was not good enough, and last night we slept at the aerodrome so as to get off at the "crack of dawn." This morning we got up about 3.30 a.m. (thank goodness, the weather was warm), and breakfast followed. It's mighty hard to get down eggs and bread and butter at that hour. We cut for the order of starting, but decided to keep as near one another as possible. I went off last but one, at 5.30 a.m., and streaked out straight across the sea. We were pretty heavily loaded, and my bus wouldn't climb much. I saw one machine ahead of me, but lost it almost immediately in the clouds, which were very low (2,500 feet), and it was also very misty.

Our course was right up the coast, past Zeebrugge, and then cut in across the land. At the mouth of the Scheldt I got clear of some of the clouds and saw Courtney behind and 2,000 feet above me, my machine then being about 5,000 feet only. He rapidly overtook me (we were all on Avros, but his was faster). Unfortunately, over Antwerp there were no clouds. Courtney was about five or six minutes in front of me, and I saw him volplane out of sight. I had to go on some little way before I spotted the yards myself. I next saw Courtney very low down, flying away to the coast with shrapnel bursting around him. He came down to under 500 feet and, being first there, dropped his bombs before he was fired on.



Topical

PIONEER AIR-RAIDER

In the raid described in this page Squadron-Commander Ivor Courtney took a daring part. For 250 miles he flew his machine, and on reaching his objective dived low before releasing his bombs while enemy anti-aircraft guns, machine-guns, and rifles poured their fire towards him. Surviving the war, he retired from the Royal Air Force with the rank of Group Captain.



F. N. Birkett

FLIGHT-LIEUT. ROSHER

The power of the war-plane was an unknown quantity when hostilities broke out, but soon pilots such as Flight-Lieut. Rosher, seen above, showed by their daring feats how great and formidable a part airmen were to play in the mighty conflict.

As the wind was dead against me, I decided to come round in a semi-circle to cross the yards with the wind, so as to attain a greater speed. I was only 5,500 feet up, and they opened fire on me with shrapnel as soon as I got within range.

It began getting a bit hot, so before I got quite round I shut off my petrol and came down with a steep volplane until I was 2,500 feet, when I turned on my petrol again and continued my descent at a rate of well over a hundred miles an hour. I passed over the yards at about 1,000 feet only, and loosed all my bombs over the place.

The whole way down I was under fire, two anti-aircraft guns in the yard, guns from the forts on either side, rifle fire, mitrailleuse or machine-guns, and, most weird of all, great bunches (15 to 20) of what looked like green rockets, but I think they were flaming bullets.

The excitement of the moment was terrific. I have never travelled so fast before in my life. My chief impressions were the great speed, the flaming bullets



'PLANE THAT MADE AIR HISTORY

From an aerodrome at Dunkirk Flight-Lieut. Rosher of the R.N.A.S. took off to carry out the raid which his own simple words describe so graphically in this chapter. Here is seen the actual 80 h.p. Avro biplane which he flew with such courage and skill on that occasion. Shortly afterwards he made a gallant attempt to intercept a Zeppelin on its way to England, and also made a bombing expedition against submarines. Other adventures followed until the career of this very fine pilot was ended by a fatal crash during a test flight in 1916.

streaking by, the incessant rattle of the machine-gun and rifle fire, and one or two shells bursting close by, knocking my machine all sideways, and pretty nearly deafening me. (On my return I found my machine was only hit twice—rather wonderful; one bullet hole through the tail and a piece of shrapnel buried in the main spar of one wing. I have now got it out.)

I FOUND myself across the yards, and felt a mild sort of surprise. My eyes must have been sticking out of my head like a shrimp's. I know I was gasping for breath and crouching down in the fuselage (body of the machine). I was, however, by no means clear, for shrapnel was still bursting around me. I jammed the rudder first one way and then the other. I banked first on to one wing tip and then on to the other, now slipping outwards, and now up and now down. I was literally hedged in by forts (and only 1,000 feet up), and had to run the gauntlet before getting away.

I was under rifle fire right up to the frontier, and even then the Dutch potted me.

My return journey was trying. Most of the time I had to fly at under 500 feet, as I ran into thick clouds and mist. I pottered gaily right over Flushing, and within a few hundred yards of a Dutch cruiser and two torpedo boats. I got back home about a quarter of an hour after Courtney, having been very nearly four hours in the air, and having covered, I suppose, getting on for 250 miles.

Have not yet heard what damage was done. The C.O. was awfully braced.

I had some breakfast when I got back, wrote out my report, had lunch, and then a very, very hot bath. Tomorrow I am going out with Courtney to see the War, as we have been given the day off to do as we please.

My engine gave me several anxious moments. For some reason it cut right out over the Scheldt, and I had actually given up all hope when it picked up again. It was pretty risky work flying several miles out to sea, only just in sight of land, too, but our surprise (or I should say Courtney's) of the Germans was certainly complete.

Must really stop now.

Ever your loving son,

HAROLD.

NOTE

The following is the Admiralty's official account of the Antwerp raid:

"The Secretary of the Admiralty yesterday afternoon [March 24, 1915] issued the following communication from Wing-Commander Longmore:

"I have to report that a successful air attack was carried out this morning by five machines of the Dunkirk Squadron on the German submarines being constructed at Hoboken, near Antwerp.

"Two of the pilots had to return owing to thick weather, but Squadron-Commander Ivor T. Courtney and Flight-Lieutenant H. Rosher reached their objective, and after planing down to 1,000 feet dropped four bombs each on the submarines. It is believed that considerable damage has been done to both the works and to submarines. The works were observed to be on fire. In all five submarines were observed on the slip.

"Flight-Lieutenant B. Crossley-Meates was obliged by engine trouble to descend in Holland.

"Owing to the mist the two pilots experienced considerable difficulty in finding their way, and were subjected to a heavy gunfire while delivering their attack."

The French official communiqué gave precise details, thus:

"At Hoboken the Antwerp shipbuilding yard was set on fire and two submarines were destroyed, while a third was damaged. Forty German workmen were killed and sixty-two wounded."



LAST FEW WORDS

The exploit which forms the subject of this chapter was but one of many which the Royal Naval Air Service pilots carried out in 1915. Above is seen a pilot talking to a French comrade before taking off for a raiding flight.

IN THE FIRST FLIGHT THEN— VETERANS NOW

UNLIKE the Navy and the Army, Britain's flying service, while still in an embryo stage, went into action in 1914 without tradition, and with its effectiveness unproven. Here are seen three distinguished men whose acumen and leadership helped to rear the then new arm into a mighty force of devastating power. These officers are shown as they were and as they are today.





TRENCHARD

From major in 1913 to major-general in 1916. Such was the remarkable rise of Viscount Trenchard (above), one of the outstanding figures of Britain's flying arm during the Great War. It was largely due to his organizing genius that the Royal Flying Corps grew from a small, ill-equipped force to be one of huge size and power. Remaining with the Service after the war, he became Marshal of the R.A.F. in 1927 and was created a viscount in 1936.

Russell and Photopress



SALMOND

As a soldier of long experience and a pioneer airman, Sir John Salmond (right) had already foreseen the vast possibilities of the air arm when he joined the Royal Flying Corps in 1912. When the Great War broke out his abilities were given full play and he was made Director-General of Military Aeronautics in 1917. In 1918 he commanded the R.F.C. and R.A.F. in the field and, remaining with the service, became Marshal of the R.A.F. in 1933.

Elliott & Fry and Russell







SYKES

When a Royal Warrant established the Royal Flying Corps on April 13, 1912, Sir Frederick Sykes (left), then a major, became commander of the military wing which he himself had raised, and with this force he went to France in 1914. In 1918 he was promoted to major-general and was appointed Chief of the Air Staff. Receiving high honours and a knighthood in 1919, he became Governor of Bombay in 1928.

Russell and Keystone

SECTION IX

Gallipoli: Bombardment & Landing

March 17 — April 27, 1915

THE Gallipoli campaign began purely as a naval operation, the aim being to reduce the forts of the Dardanelles and force the passage of the Narrows to the Sea of Marmora and Constantinople. This having failed, a military landing was decided upon, which took place on April 25. ¶ These early days are described in this section by L.-Cpl. Powell, R.M., who was in the Irresistible when she was sunk during the bombardment of March 18 ¶ Sir Ian Hamilton, who was in charge of the military operations, writes his hourly impressions of the heroic landing, and Major Mure tells the story of the historic ship River Clyde and the shambles which surrounded it ¶ To two Australian soldiers is entrusted the task of describing the heroism of their comrades at the Anzac landing and during the great Turkish counter-attack Few more bitter conflicts occurred during the Great War

* 61 March 17 — 18, 1915

MY LAST HOURS in the IRRESISTIBLE

Marine's Heroic Story of the Dardanelles

by L.-Cpl. Powell, R.M.

ALL through the day of March 17, 1915, the Irresistible had been in a seething state of excitement. On deck, in the various casemates, the guns' crews had been busily engaged in seeing to their beloved guns, one man testing the sights, the ammunition numbers getting their supply of shells ready. Every man was doing his little bit, with a quiet smile of satisfaction, and similar scenes were being enacted throughout the great Fleet that lay riding at anchorage—such a Fleet as had never before assembled in such a place.

A magnificent spectacle it was, to see the different warships, all manner and classes of them, from the gigantic super-Dreadnought Queen Elizabeth (known throughout the fleet as the "Lizzie") down to the humble trawlers, the little boats that did their work equally as well as the biggest ship there.

GRIM, black destroyers raced to and from the flagship, where the admiral was holding a council with all the captains of the fleet. The French admiral, his officers, and a representative of the one Russian warship, all were there. And such a meeting it was, too, a meeting that on the morrow was to produce results that would be talked about half the world over. For the 18th was the day selected for the grand assault on the Dardanelles Forts.

The shrill whistles of the boatswain's mates woke us in the morning. "Show a leg! Show a leg! Rise and shine!" At last the day, so long looked forward to, had arrived; the day for which all the preparations had been made.

Down below, in the stokehold and engine-room, the grimy stokers were getting up steam, half naked, black with coal-dust, the men who are seen least of all, and yet no body of men work harder. Down below again, behind the armoured belt, the surgeons and their assistants were busy erecting a miniature hospital. Several operating tables were to be seen, lint and bandages were laid out, the instruments all handy, ready for any emergency.

In the various parts of the ship the bluejackets and Marines were going about their work, some testing the water-tight doors, on which so much depended, others closing all deadlights, screwing down the steel covers, to keep out any stray missiles.

GRIM, FLOATING FORTRESS

SOON the whole ship was still. At last we were cleared for action, and truly grim did we look—a vast mass of 15,000 tons, a floating fortress indeed. On deck, groups of men clustered together, talking eagerly amongst themselves, and over all hung a curious air of expectancy, a feeling hard to define.

At 8 a.m. the big ships were to commence their task. Sure enough, on the stroke of eight bells, we could see the giant Queen Elizabeth slowly steaming away, followed by the Lord Nelson, Inflexible and Agamemnon. Truly a sight to stir one's blood—those monster ships, with ever-increasing speed, heading towards the Dardanelles and their grim work of destruction. Followed the French squadron, four ships of the line, so different in build to our own ships, yet giving one a true impression of their power—ugly, squat ships, yet so very grim and business-like.

In one long line they steamed away, and now there remained only the older battleships, the old "crocks," as we called them. There was the Irresistible (of course, in the writer's opinion, the best ship of the lot!), the Albion, Ocean, Triumph, Swiftsure, and Majestic, not one of them under fifteen years of age, and yet for this particular kind of work not to be equalled.

A very short while elapsed before the ships that had left us got to work; the thunder of their guns could be heard quite plainly by us. I am sure there wasn't a man amongst us who did not envy our comrades already up there, although we all knew that our turn would not be very long in coming.

The morning dragged along slowly. No incident worth recording occurred, unless it was a signal flashed back to our waiting squadron from the Queen Elizabeth, saying that splendid progress was being made.

But all things come to an end, and our turn of inactivity was almost over. Shortly before noon the signal came through for our little fleet to proceed—the signal we had all been waiting for so patiently! At last we were to have our turn. "Hands to anchor stations!" was piped, and in less time almost than it takes to tell, we were under way, steaming slowly ahead, waiting to take our place in line. Forming up into line ahead, the Albion leading, our squadron steamed slowly towards the entrance of the Dardanelles. As yet, all hands were on deck, eager to have one last look around before we went to "action stations."

AS we turned the corner, and caught our first sight of the ships already there, we instantly realized what we were in for. A long way up the Straits, spread about all over the place, were the Allied ships, the French lying right in close to both shores, while lying behind and firing over them were our own four big ships. All around the water was dotted with white splashes of foam, where the Turkish shells were falling. What with the vivid flashes from the guns, the splashes from the shells, now falling ahead, now astern,

it was truly a sight never to be forgotten.

But any more looking on was cut short by the bugle sounding "Action!" At the rush everybody went to their respective stations, and then, with the guns loaded and everything ready to begin, the six "crocks" steamed into position, into the inferno of shells and shot.

WHAT my feelings were I leave the reader to guess. Secure inside an upper-deck casemate, and looking through the aperture through which our gun poked, I had an excellent view of it all. I could see the shells dropping all around us, hear them whistling and shrieking overhead, and as yet we had not fired a round. But soon we commenced, and in a very short time all the fourteen battleships were hammering away for all they were worth.

The noise was tremendous—one continual roar. Surely, I thought, nothing ashore could live under such a tremendous fire! For nearly six hours now the bombardment had been going on, and yet there had been no lull in the firing: if anything, it increased in its intensity as the afternoon wore on. Some part of the time our gun would not bear on the target, so our gun's crew had an opportunity of looking out a little, to see what was going on all around. From where I was I could see, almost at the very entrance to the Straits, it seemed, the Queen Elizabeth battering away, her huge 15-in. guns pointing upwards, and great clouds of yellow smoke drifting away from her every time she fired. And all around her the water was splashed up in tremendous columns. Shells were being simply poured in her direction.

Yet through it all the "Lizzie" continued her firing, in contempt, as it were, of these puny efforts to do her harm. It seemed marvellous to us, looking on, that she was not hit.

Time was getting on, still there was no lull in the firing. Looking out of my casement I could observe, steaming slowly towards us, one of the French squadron. We afterwards knew it to have been the Bouvet. As she came along, all her guns blazing away, she presented a remarkable picture. Little did the poor fellows aboard her realize how very near they were to their doom!

It all happened so suddenly. One minute the Bouvet was steaming majestically along, the next moment a tremendous cloud of smoke or steam arose, completely hiding her from view, and when, after two or three minutes, the smoke cleared away, where had been a gallant ship there now remained only a few struggling forms in the water.

Up dashed a destroyer, which soon had the poor fellows aboard, and all the while the shells were falling fast around the little vessel, as if to drive her from her errand of mercy. Yet she was not touched, and, turning, sped away at full speed for the entrance of the Straits.

'LIZZIE' OF GALLIPOLI FAME

The Queen Elizabeth, flagship of the Allied fleet at Gallipoli, was affectionately known to soldiers and sailors, too, as "Lizzie." She is here seen in Mudros harbour just before leaving for Turkish waters. She shows one of the first examples of naval camouflage, for her stem is painted white just where the bow wave would be when she was at full speed. Thus from a distance she might appear to be moving fast when actually she was only just under way. Beyond her is one of the transports that carried troops to Gallipoli.

Imperial War Museum



To celebrate, as it were, this success on the enemy's part, the firing from land became fiercer than ever. It was about this time that the Irresistible received her first blow. A shell—I think it must have been a 14-in.—hit us somewhere forward. Fair and square it caught us, for the whole ship shook, actually reeled over a little, and then righted herself once more to an even keel. A few minutes after this first hit another big shell burst in the water immediately outside our casemate, simply drenching everybody inside with the splash it made. Water was everywhere, a column of it was raised high enough to swamp a smaller vessel

THINGS began to be rather lively now. It seemed to us that the Irresistible was being made the sole target, judging by the number of shells that fell around us, although, of course, such was not the case. One of the chaps in our crew remarked, with a grin, "Something will happen in a minute; it is getting —— hot."

And, sure enough, something did happen. We had just been hit again forward by another big shell that shook us all up, and then, before we had time to recover ourselves, a tremendous shock was felt. Fully half a dozen of our crew were thrown violently over, and when order had been regained there was the old Irresistible heeling over to port, at an angle of fully 45 degrees, and our gun pointing in the air for all the world like an anti-aircraft gun.

It did not need anyone to explain. We one and all knew that the Irresistible had fought her last fight. My feelings at this moment were too awful to describe. I never want to feel the same as I did then. Little did I think, while watching the Bouvet go down, that our own turn was so soon to come. Except for the men who had been thrown down picking themselves up, nobody had moved in our casemate. All we could do was to await orders, looking, meanwhile, into each other's white, set faces.

BUT we were not to remain long waiting. Orders came along to clear the casemate, everybody to get on deck. So, opening the casemate doors, we trooped out, wondering what would be the next thing to happen. Then we were told to get aft. So aft we all went, and in a very short while all the ship's company, with the exception of the gun's crew who was still firing, fell in in their places. Not a sign of panic or disorder showed itself anywhere; everybody had gone to his respective station just as calmly as if it were a parade.

Now that we were aft, in the open, we could get a clear view of what was going on around us. Our ship had almost righted herself, although we could see how low in the water she was. Eagerly we gazed around, to see, as we hoped, a welcome destroyer or torpedo boat coming towards us. But no, not one was near us—at least, so it seemed. Suddenly a man standing right aft pointed to the entrance of the Straits,



Photopress

A WASP OF THE FRENCH FLEET STINGS

The twenty-nine British and French destroyers that supported the landing at Gallipoli were the wasps of the fleet. While the battleships remained at sea shelling the Turkish positions, the destroyers dashed in close to the shore and poured a hot fire from their small guns in support of the infantry. This French destroyer is engaged in that useful work and, as the foam of her bow wave streaming away astern shows, she is steaming at full speed as she fires, so that she is a difficult mark for the enemy guns.



WHEN THE BIG GUNS BOOMED AT GALLIPOLI

Two British battleships are seen in this page in action off the Gallipoli Peninsula. The shore with its low but steep cliffs, where the gallant deeds described in this chapter were enacted, can be discerned in both photographs. Above is the battleship Albion, fairly close in shore, with Turkish shells bursting uncomfortably close to her. Below, much farther out at sea, a 12-in. gun of H.M.S. Canopus is sending its unwelcome messengers to a Turkish battery.

Photos, Imperial War Museum





IRRESISTIBLE MET A SWIFT FATE

In this photograph the Irresistible is seen in her full splendour, a formidable giant of seeming strength and power. A battleship of 15,000 tons, she was mounted with four 12-inch and twelve 6-inch guns. How she met a swift and hapless fate, a victim of mines and Turkish gun-fire, is told in this chapter by one who was aboard the ship at the time and saw the tragedy, horror and heroism of the final scene.

Imperial War Museum

and we could see, far away, a destroyer or boat of some sort speeding towards us, smoke flying from her funnels—a welcome sight indeed.

But now came the worst part of our troubles. Even as I recall it, the thought of it causes me to shudder. Since the Irresistible had received her death-blow we had, almost unnoticed to us, been quietly drifting towards the Asiatic side of the Straits. The Turks ashore must have quickly realized how helpless we were, for instantly scores and scores of guns were trained upon us, and the shells began to drop all around. Truly a most uncomfortable position for us; over 600 men, helpless, forced to stand and endure this!

All the while the destroyer was getting ever nearer to us, and just as surely the Turks in the shore batteries were finding our range.

Soon the shells began to fall closer and closer, raising tremendous columns of water where they struck, some bursting and turning the water black for yards around. If ever men lived through moments of agony, we did then. These awful shells, ever growing nearer, struck terror into our hearts. He would be an extraordinary man who would have taken no notice of them.

But the hour of our deliverance was almost at hand. Nearer and nearer came the destroyer, the Wear, commanded by Captain Metcalfe, and finally, while hardly decreasing her speed, she came up alongside, her propellers churning the water as she went full speed astern; and in almost less time than it takes to tell she was secure, made fast head and stern, motionless, as fine a piece of seamanship as man ever witnessed.

Our captain, who all this time had never left the bridge, despite the now constant hail of shells, gave the order: "Boys and ordinary seamen, in the boat." One can imagine with what speed this order was obeyed, but through it all there was not the slightest rush of any sort. Every boy and man took his place, passing from the doomed ship to the destroyer as if he were going ashore on leave.

Followed the order, "All hands next!" Our turn at last! From a dozen different places we streamed over the side into the destroyer and safety; but not all of us were destined to be saved. At the very moment when the last batch of men were preparing to leave the quarter-deck a shell burst amongst them.

What followed, seen by practically all the ship's company, would be too horrible to describe, but when the smoke had cleared away, on the spot where before had stood a dozen men, nothing now remained but a few mangled forms. Men already in the destroyer, forced to witness such a sight, were splashed from head to foot with the blood of their comrades!

Volunteers quickly scrambled aboard the ship again and carried those poor fellows in whom there still existed a spark of life aboard the destroyer. At last all who were going to leave were aboard, and the destroyer was cast off by a few brave fellows who had volunteered to stay for this purpose. With her precious freight of over 600 souls, she slipped away from the stricken ship and, gradually gaining speed, turned round and was off towards the entrance and safety.

And not a moment too soon, for even as the destroyer left the Irresistible a salvo of shells—six or eight of them—fell into the water exactly on the spot where a moment before we had been! Truly a narrower escape it would have been impossible to have had, for had the destroyer been there at that particular moment, nothing would have saved us all from destruction. For those shells would have crushed the destroyer like an eggshell!

So there we were now, speeding along at a tremendous rate. One last look we had of the poor old Irresistible. There she lay, the water now almost level with her quarter-deck, the shells, now that the batteries had found the range, bursting all over her; and on the bridge, standing there so calmly, gazing after the fast-disappearing destroyer, Captain Dent who, with ten volunteers, remained—the whole presenting such a scene as few men who saw it will ever forget.

MY LAST SIGHT OF MY SHIP

There were, I should say, very few dry eyes amongst us as we gazed upon that scene, for the old Irresistible had been a good ship—none better. So she passed from our view. Never more would we see her again, the ship that had been our home for so many months.

Very soon we were all aboard the Queen Elizabeth, the wounded carried below, while the destroyer raced off again on a second errand of mercy. We heard later on that Captain Dent and those left aboard the Irresistible had been saved. What a cheer we gave when we heard the glad news!

THROUGH DEATH VALLEY with the ANZACS

by Private Fred Fox, A.I.F.

FROM commander-in-chief to humble private is a far cry in the military hierarchy, but—supplementing Sir Ian Hamilton's magnificent account of the Gallipoli landing — we print the narrative of an Australian who took part in the Anzac landing. How the first parties rushed ashore to almost certain death is here chronicled by one who on that fateful day was severely wounded

ON April 23 the battalion was assembled on deck, and our commanding officer, Colonel Lyall Johnston, told us we had been selected by General Sir Ian Hamilton to storm the position selected for the Australian landing in Gallipoli. Gravely he added that we must prepare, in any event, to " do the job," and, if necessary, be sacrificed. He had inspected the positions from a cruiser, and gave us some idea of the work at hand. His statement was received with thunderous cheering. We were not only ready, we rejoiced that our chance had come. Rifles were oiled, and we saw to it that the points on our bayonets were sharp.

On Saturday, April 24, a destroyer came alongside, and our two companies, A and C, at once embarked. We sailed to the end of Mudros Bay, and boarded H.M.S. London. There was tremendous enthusiasm, and about 3 p.m. the flagship took up her position, and away we went, amid a storm of cheering from both the French and English transports and warships. We were in wonderful spirits, and soon made friends with our naval comrades, who entertained us in the way that only Jack can do.

We had a short service on the quarter-deck, in which the chaplain spoke most kindly to us, and then, left to our own devices, we had a look round the ship. Some of the time was spent in playing cards, and there was also a good impromptu concert. As night settled down, we made ourselves as comfortable as possible and composed ourselves to sleep. All lights were, of course, extinguished. Very early on Sunday morning, April 25, we were roused, and went below, where we enjoyed a fine hot meal, prepared for us by our friend Jack. There was no excitement, only a feeling of quiet confidence over all.

We got our kits on, which consisted of 200 rounds of ammunition each, three days' rations of bully beef and biscuits, also three empty sandbags, to fill with earth when we got the opportunity. These things made up rather a heavy load, but our instructions were

ANZAC HEROES OFF TO GALLIPOLI

This unique photograph, taken on the bow of H.M.S. London, shows some of Private Fox's comrades looking ahead full of high hope for the gallant adventure on which they are embarked. The Great Armada that sailed from Mudros on April 23 consisted of the Queen Elizabeth, flagship, eighteen British and French battleships, twelve cruisers, besides a large number of smaller craft. In this photograph the 2nd Battleship Squadron, in which the London was included, is steaming in line ahead towards Gallipoli.

Imperial War Museum



to take off the pack immediately we landed, and go for the enemy with the bayonet. We were not to fire a shot until daylight, or when ordered.

About 2 a.m. we were ordered to embark in the boats, which were drawn up alongside, with a steam pinnace to tow them. This we did without any mishap, and the beach parties belonging to the warships followed us. It was all very weird in the absolute silence, with a very, very pale moon shining. I had no idea how far we were from the shore, but we had steamed under the lee of the battleship for some time, when the order came from the captain to " carry on " on our own. Now was the critical time. I shall never forget that sight. There were three or four lines of us, with a space of perhaps 100 yards between, going stealthily and slowly towards—what ?

WE seemed to have been hours on the way when the shape of the battleship faded away, and gradually we picked out the shores of the peninsula outlined against the sky. Most forbidding they looked, too. There was rather an amusing incident about this time. I was in the second boat, and our steering officer in the pinnace was zig-zagging a little. A naval commander in the next tow asked him several times, *sotto voce*, " to be more careful." He appeared to take no notice ; and his superior roared : " For heaven's sake, steer straight, or you will spoil the whole show ! " We had to stifle our mirth, but it was very funny.

THE ENEMY SPOTTED US

THE hills, which we could now discern through the gloom, were very grim and gaunt, and we felt that we had left all protection behind. There is something very consoling when one can see a battleship. However, we set our teeth, and wriggled to get into anything approaching a comfortable position, for we were packed in the boats like sardines. No sign of life on shore could we see, and we were becoming confident that we should land unawares and surprise the Turks. Suddenly a light flashed ashore, and was visible to us for about five minutes. We knew now what to expect. The enemy had spotted us ; we were in it right up to the neck. The tension was relieved, and so, I think, was every soldier.

To explain what followed, I should mention that as soon as the pinnace cast the tow off, half a dozen soldiers in each boat were told off to seize the oars, and pull as hard as they could for the shore, beaching each boat separately. We could now see the land plainly, but the light was too bad to distinguish any movement ashore. We were about thirty yards away when the pinnace cast off. No sooner were the oars in position, than—bang ! from the right came the shrapnel. The Turks on the cliff and in the trenches were pouring forth a murderous fire from rifle and machine-gun. The range was point-blank, and how they missed any of us is hard to say.

NO orders were given—or wanted—then. Every man not disabled at once jumped overboard. I handed my rifle to a sailor to hold, and went over into the water up to the armpits. The poor fellow was handing my rifle back to me when a shrapnel shell burst just overhead, and killed him. It was a terrible time. Under the water was a network of wires, and we were slipping and tripping about frightfully. A comrade of mine went under ; I grabbed him up, and after a struggle we managed to get ashore. This little incident was repeated all along the beach.

Believe me, the noise was beyond imagination ; all hell seemed to be let loose. We were shivering with the cold, but we wanted blood now. Off went the packs, the steel rang as we fixed bayonets, and, forming into some sort of a line, up the cliff we rushed, regardless of the rifle or machine-gun fire. Nothing could stop these mad Australians now.

" Advance, Australia ! " went up the battle-cry. Cooeeing and swearing, tripping and sliding, we were in among those Turks, and there was not one alive in their first line of trenches a quarter of an hour after our landing, on this amazing and glorious Sunday morning of April 25, 1915.

No quarter was given, no prisoners were taken. Day was breaking quickly now, and after the first terrific rush we had an opportunity to have a look round. We kept in the captured trenches, which were excellent, stored with food and ammunition, and saw a sight which gladdened our hearts—dozens of transports steaming in, full of troops. Destroyers, too ; and last, but not least, " Our Lizzie." What a glorious cheer went up ! It was great to have done this.

But I must continue. The shrapnel and the snipers were still playing havoc with our landing parties, and the poor fellows were falling fast.

Such heroism as those lads displayed may have been equalled—it can never have been surpassed. It is good to be British. Some of our boats were adrift with the whole of the crew out of action. There were lots of our comrades lying about, too, in all sorts of positions, dead and wounded.

Our medical officer, Captain Brennan, and his assistants were working like Trojans, but all they could do was to give the poor fellows quick first-aid, and leave them. All were heroes on that day. Our commanding officer came up, passed a word of praise and good cheer, and the Brigadier was highly elated, too.

MEN DROPPED LIKE NINEPINS

ALL was the work of a few minutes, taking longer to tell than it did to happen. But stern work was still before us. It was now our part to beat the enemy's counter-attack. We hurried down the side of the ravine, enemy shrapnel and snipers dealing out death all the time, and gradually, as we got into line, the fire grew hotter and hotter. Men dropped like ninepins, and, being in thick scrub, we could not see the enemy.

It was ideal country for defence, but all against attack. This ravine was at once called Death Valley, a name that has stuck to it. It was a terribly hot day, and tried our tempers sorely. In fact, we saw red. We were fighting more or less in bunches of three or four, always advancing. Some of us detached ourselves for sniping, and I swear beat the enemy at their own game.

The firing was deadly, and during the early morning caused a tremendous lot of casualties, and no mercy was shown. Suddenly the fire on us slackened a little ; the enemy's attention was partly diverted to a hydroplane from the battleships which was endeavouring to get the range. A tremendous amount of ammunition was wasted on the flying machine, but it sailed serenely on, and shortly after its disappearance we were greatly cheered by the shots from the ships firing over our heads. We were now getting a bit of our own back.

WE could not see it, of course, but were cheered by messages which said that the Turkish reinforcements which were being hurried up were suffering terribly. We had no chance to dig ourselves in ; we had to push the enemy from the beach to give our main body a chance. So on we went, never firing unless we could be sure of a result. Occasionally we got into them with the bayonet, but they had already had their lesson, and generally cleared out when we were close to them. If they had been given a moment's respite we should have suffered more, and no doubt have been compelled to give way. As long as the Turks were on the run, our reinforcements with ammunition, picks, and other impedimenta, had a sporting chance, for once they had passed the



BOATLOADS OF BRAVE MEN ON A GALLIPOLI BEACH

In all the history of the war there is no finer record of heroism than that of the Australians' ill-fated assault at Gallipoli in 1915. Here is a unique photograph, taken by Captain Milligan of the A.I.F. at 7.30 a.m. on the morning of April 25, showing men of the 4th Battalion landing. From a placid, sunlit sea the Anzacs moved to a beach where death awaited many. Coolly standing in the foreground are some officers, including Brigadier-General H. N. MacLaurie of the 1st Infantry Brigade. Captain Milligan was killed shortly after he had taken this photograph.

enfilading shrapnel fire on the beach, they had a comparatively easy time before reaching the firing-line. It was terrible, though, to see one's friends falling. We were comrades all, rendering first aid whenever possible, and our padre was as brave as a lion.

OUR officers were great, too. They were equipped exactly the same as ourselves, but only carried a switch, and to see Major Drake Brockman, my company officer, smoking a cigarette and calmly walking up and down the line, was something to inspire at the time, and to be remembered so long as memory lasts.

Our brave old Colonel Lyall Johnston was as cool as a cucumber, cheering us all by his wonderful sangfroid. We called him "Tipperary," and he was proud of his name and his boys.

It was now about twelve noon, and we must have advanced a couple of miles. The firing-line now was very much strengthened, our 1st and 2nd Brigades having by this time got a lot of their men on shore. An Indian mountain battery had also arrived, and, with the guns of the battleships, was giving us great assistance. The earth fairly shook with the explosions when the big guns were fired, and the air was alive with bullets zip-zipping over our heads.

Our advance was so rapid that the Turkish batteries found it rather hard to locate us with their shrapnel; in fact, in one case we were right on them before they were aware of it, and we took three howitzer guns, bayoneting the gunners. Losses or no losses, on we went. It was just great.

About this time I found a small knoll, and, being rather fatigued, two comrades and I sat down for a smoke and a bit of biscuit. I remember thinking what a glorious day it was. I could hear the birds singing, and I was wondering how it could be that men should be murdering each other so on God's good Sunday, when one of my friends dropped—a sniper had spotted him. He simply sank down—dead.

OFF we rushed again. The fire was getting hotter and hotter. I and two others were on the extreme left flank, and making for another rush, when a shrapnel shell burst right overhead, killing the soldier on my left, and hitting me fair in the right knee. I thought the earth had hit me. Over and over I went, and for a while the pain was excruciating. I immediately charged the magazine of my rifle, and started pulling myself on my stomach to the beach, a distance of quite three miles. Losing a lot of blood, and in great pain, I persevered. I was a fine mark for the snipers on the left flank, and my tunic and breeches were riddled with bullets, but the little cherub that sits up above was good to me. I shall always remember that crawl in the terribly hilly scrub.

About half-way down I fell into a trench, and became unconscious. However, two of my comrades found me, and carried me pick-a-back down to the beach. They were splendid chaps. I certainly owe my life to them, for had they not found me I should have bled to death, or perhaps worse. My knee was dressed; I was laid on a stretcher, and placed in a punt.

All that night it rained in torrents, but I knew no more until I was hoisted aboard the transport on Monday morning. I had had a lot of pain, but was quite happy. We did what we had to do, and I was proud to belong to the Australian Volunteer Contingent.

The doctors told me I should have a stiff knee for the rest of my days as a souvenir of that terrible and yet glorious Sunday when the Australians landed on Gallipoli. To have lived through such a day and to be alive to tell the story is a sheer miracle.

DAUNTLESS in the FACE of DEATH

I Saw the Heroes of 'River Clyde'

by Major A. H. Mure, T.D.

MAJOR MURE had a spectator's view of the immortal landing of the troops from the old collier, the River Clyde, at 'V' Beach from the deck of a transport close in to the shore. Here he pays tribute to the almost incredible heroism of the troops who wrote this most glorious page of our military history

ON April 25, 1915, the fleet was bombarding the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles, where the French were drawing Turkish fire by making a feint of landing. On that side there was a long cliff with the usual row of Eastern houses on the top. It was extraordinary to see a house crumple and topple down. The Russian battleship [Askold], with its five funnels, christened by Tommy the "Packet of Woodbines," did great execution.

What looked to be a cottage was built on a small promontory jutting out from the edge of the cliff. For hours the little building defied the gunners, and seemed almost to mock the best markmanship in Europe, so long did it stand unscathed. At last a shell landed right into it, and down it came at the first touch, exactly like a castle of playing cards, such as you and I used to build years ago. The whole ship cheered vociferously. . . . Its end was unmistakable. When it had toppled to its doom, we turned our attention to graver matters of battle. Krithia, well to our north, was ablaze, and Achi Baba, just beyond, was getting a generous share of the "heavies."

WE could not tell how the day was going. Indescribable noise we could hear, indescribable flame and confusion we could see, indescribable carnage could infer, but we could not piece together or interpret the awful confusion of detail. There was a green field to the left on the top of the cliff, and we could see men rushing across it, then coming back, then advancing again, as if a stiff fight were going on. Towards Sedd el Bahr there seemed to be no progress, and we, watching and waiting, began to feel nervous and imagined that all was not well. . . .

It was evident by this time that a landing had been effected, though not so successful a landing as had been anticipated. But we had begun. We were doing something—the rattle of musketry told that. It became more pronounced as the evening wore on, sharper, quicker, more distraught, as if thousands of death-dice were being tossed feverishly by the nervous hands of a multitude of desperate gamblers.

I don't think many slept that night, and sharp at dawn every man of us was up and astir to see—if he could—what was happening . . .

An hour later, thralled and breathless, I was watching the first big infantry charge I had ever seen. It was a glorious and terrible sight, and I felt as it looked—fearful and exultant. The infantry pushed and tore through the village of Sedd el Bahr up to the fort belching fire and death from the cliff beyond.

The blood danced in our veins, as we leaned and looked, our souls fighting with those men struggling in the thick of carnage.

Their bayonets flashed in the dancing sunlight, and as the men rattled on, bleeding, dying, yet persisting, conquering, the glittering sheen they threw before them and about them scintillated like a sea of liquid, burnished steel, more alive than the molten sunlight it mocked and outshone, throwing great swathes of terrible searchlight for yards in front of our straining, suffering infantry, and for yards on either side of them. And we could hear the men shouting, "Go on, lads; go on, you devils! Give them hell!" and cries much more vitriolic, less episcopal.

TORTURE AND SLAUGHTER

"GO on, lads"—nothing very Homeric in that! Ah! wait and hear—hear it from a thousand British throats, when the day runs red and the fight rises and falls in awful sheets and sweeps of torture and slaughter, necks knotted, backs strained, eyes and hearts bursting, breasts heaving and panting, wounds unheeded, death mocked and defied. The fort was taken. We saw our men stagger and sway with fatigue and the recoil of mighty work done and accomplished. Then they recovered, threw off their brief relaxation (it had been but an instant), shook themselves into position and re-formed. . . . Lieut.-Colonel Doughty-Wylie of the General Staff had gone ashore to direct operations. He had to lead the assault, and leading he fell, just when the fort was as good as taken. And for a monument to a man and a soldier the fort was given his name.

In the afternoon we received a signal that ammunition was needed, and presently a pinnace came along with a lighter in tow. Then there was turmoil. Every officer itched and clamoured to go. But O.C. Troops was on board, and he went himself, and took my second-in-command with him. I silently consigned them both to a place which, after all, was probably cool and comfortable compared with the spot where they landed.

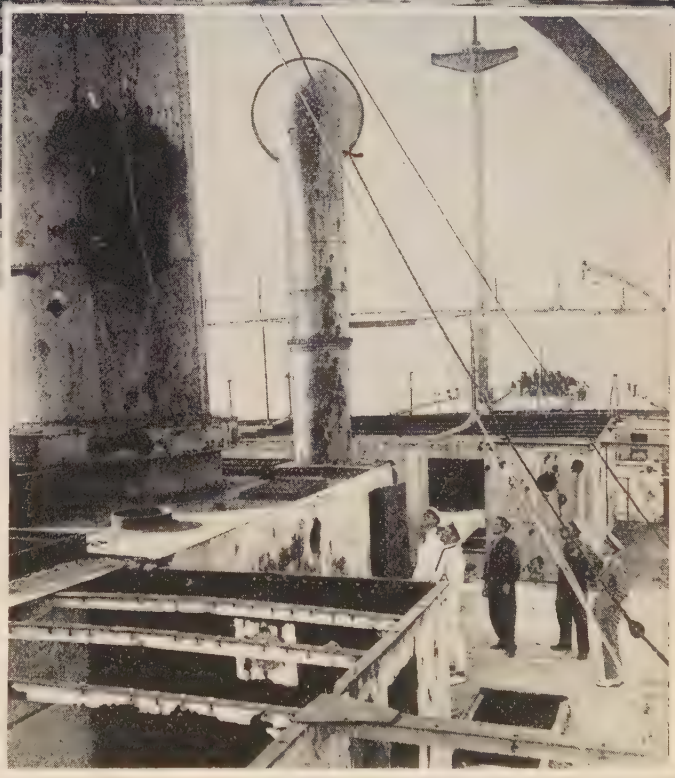
THEY both came back safely towards sunset, and we gathered about them like schoolboys round a toffee-box. But they wouldn't talk. I believe they couldn't. Wilson said that "it was indescribable," and that was every word I could get out of him. About 1 a.m. next morning still more ammunition was wanted, and my chance had come.

I set off in a pinnace towing two ammunition lighters, and headed for the River Clyde, an old collier that had been turned into a sort of ferry-boat for troops, to carry them from troopships to shore. Great open spaces had been cut in her side at her between-decks, and lower down platforms and runs had been built that men might rush from her quickly when landing under accurate fire. Encased machine-guns stood on her forecastle that she might, when desirable, give the Turks fire for fire. She had now been beached, purposely, as near shore as was practicable.

FROM her to the shore ran a rough bridge of boats, lighters and miscellaneous small craft, across which the men had to crawl and slide to the shore. This bridge had been built at a terrible cost, with a disregard of death as glorious as anything in the history of war.

When the River Clyde was beached, twenty-five launches packed with men slipped ahead of her, and the men in them—knowing perfectly the nature and the extent of their danger—began to make the required bridge, getting small boats into position and securely moored, working from the River Clyde to the beach. Soon after she grounded, the





TWO THOUSAND HEROES WERE IN HER HOLD

Three stages in the almost inconceivably heroic story of the River Clyde told in this chapter are shown in the photographs in this page. Above she is lying in Mudros Harbour being fitted out for the immortal landing. The great openings in her side through which the men were to leave the ship have already been cut. Right is her fore deck after the landing, showing the terrible damage done by enemy shells to the superstructure, evidence of the terrific fire to which she was subjected. Below she is seen a few days after the landing. The great doors, through which more than 2,000 men passed, are still open, the gangway along which they went and the pontoons which made a landing stage are still in place.

Imperial War Museum





SHAMBLES IN THE TURKISH SUN

To reach this meagre, crumpled place, the village of Sedd el Bahr, British soldiers worked, struggled and rushed forward beneath a blazing sun and amid a fury of crushing fire. Death took a frightful toll on that terrible April day in 1915, yet immediately others poured into the carnage to live or die and leave an undying tale of superlative, poignant heroism.

Imperial War Museum

Turks opened fire on the heroic little bridge of boats, finished half-way or more to the shore, bombarding it from the ruined castle of Sedd el Bahr, from the higher town, and from the splendidly fortified and magnificently manned and munitioned hill that stretched across the bay. . . .

The waiting troops on the big ship were more protected, for the River Clyde was fortified, too, and had many contrivances of defence, but the little boats were naked and helpless. The Turks are computed to have sent from five to twelve thousand shots a minute into that devoted band of men. Not one man flinched. But most of them died. As a boatload perished, men rushed down the gangway of the River Clyde and carried on.

A man who lived ten minutes under that Turkish fire seemed to have a charmed life. Most dropped within four minutes. But before they dropped they worked—ah, how they worked while they yet lived! Each did his small vital bit; and when he lurched bleeding into his sea grave, a comrade, newly come, snatched up his job until he, too, died, to be succeeded by yet another British soldier. . . .

The holocaust was hideous, but the object for which the men died was fulfilled. The bridge was completed and the Turks could not prevent it. A Turkish officer, our prisoner later, swore by Allah that it was the finest thing he ever saw, and ten times braver than he would have credited of any man, Christian or Mussulman.

It was over this blood-cemented bridge that Lieut.-Colonel Doughty-Wylie had led his men, to storm, through indescribable difficulties, the ruins of Sedd el Bahr. And it was over it that I now went, as cautiously as possible, leaving my pinnace beside the River Clyde, and scrambling as best I could from boat to boat. The moon had risen by this time, and the beastly evidences of the relentless conflict were thick about; you could not fail to see them clearly, and they looked all the ghastlier in the theatrical limelight of the Orient moon.

The heroism of the troops who built that bridge of boats, in daylight, under tremendous, hellish fire, must have been superlative. It beggars all words, and I will attempt none. But we thought of them and our thoughts were eloquent. For we found it no small thing to pick our way, at our own pace, the Turks temporarily inactive, over those swaying, bobbing craft. To go over them in full marching order must have been a difficult feat in itself, let alone building the way as they went, doing it under shot and shell.

On reaching the beach, I clambered over the lighters to see where the ammunition was to be dumped first, and began to slip and slide all over the place. I bent down to examine the wood on which I was skidding, and I saw—well, it wasn't water that was making me slide about! It was something thicker than water.

On the shore I found a very tired-looking assistant-beachmaster. I remarked, "You seem to have had a pretty thick time." He answered not a word. He only looked at me. It was enough. I shall remember that look while I live.



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GENERAL AT GALLIPOLI

The onerous duty of being Commander-in-Chief of the expeditionary force engaged in the tragic Gallipoli adventure fell to General Sir Ian Hamilton, seen here as he was at the time of the campaign.

'MY OWN DARK HOURS'

As Commander-in-Chief at Gallipoli

by General Sir Ian Hamilton,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O.

SIR IAN HAMILTON has long been recognized as one of the greatest writers on modern warfare. Nothing exceeds the brilliance and urgency of his account of the ill-fated campaign on the Gallipoli peninsula. He was in command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force and shared to the full the trials and tragic adventures of his men. His story is continued in Chapter 65

ON April 24 the Queen Elizabeth anchored off Tenedos just before 4 p.m., lay outside the roadstead. Close by us was the British Fleet with an armada of transports, all at anchor. As we were closing up to them we spotted a floating mine which must have been passed touch-and-go during the night by all those warships and troopships. A good omen, surely, that not one of them fell foul of the death that lurks in that ugly horned devil—not dead itself, but very much alive, for it answered a shot from one of our three-pounders with the dull roar and spitting of fire and smoke bred for our benefit by the kindly German *Kultur*.

Our Queen Elizabeth chose the cold, grey hour of 4 a.m. on April 25 to make her war toilette. By 4.15 she had sunk the lady and put on the man-of-war. She was cleared for action now, and so are we.

If this is a queer start for me, so it is also for de Robeck, the commanding admiral. A fleet lies in the grip of its admiral like a platoon in the hands of a subaltern. The admiral sees, speaks the executive word and the whole fleet moves ; not as with us, each commander carrying out the order in his own way, but each captain steaming, firing, retiring to the letter of the signal. In the Navy, the man at the gun, the man at the helm, the man sending up shells in the hoist is an automaton, unless indeed the gear goes wrong and he has to use his wits to put it right again. With us the infantry scout may have to decide whether to open fire, to lie low or to fall back ; whether to bring on a battle or avoid it. But the Fleet today is working like an army. The ships are widely scattered, each one on its own, except in so far as wireless may serve, and that is why I say Admiral de Robeck is working in a way just as strange to him as mine is to me. My station is up in the conning tower with de Robeck. The conning tower is a circular metal chamber, like a big cooking pot. Here we are, all eyes, like potatoes in the cooking pot, trying to peep through a slit where the lid is raised a few inches, *ad hoc*, as these blasted politicians like to say. My staff are not with me in this holy of holies, but are stowed away in steel towers or jammed into 6-inch batteries.

At 4.30 a.m. we were off Sedd el Bahr. All quiet and grey. Thence we steamed for Gaba Tepe, and midway, about five o'clock, heard a very heavy fire from Helles, behind us. Now we are off Gaba Tepe.

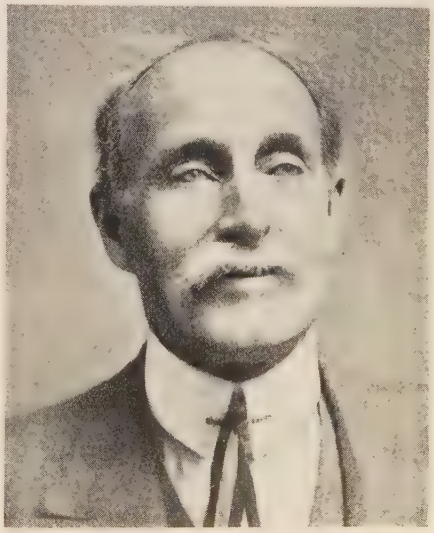
Day was just breaking over the jagged hills ; the sea was glassy smooth. The landing was in full swing. Shrapnel was bursting over the water, the patter of musketry ; the machine-guns spluttered. Would we be out of it ? No, not one of us ; not for five hundred years stuffed full of dullness and routine.

WAVE AFTER WAVE DISAPPEAR

BY 5.35 the rattle of small arms died down ; 4,000 fighting men had been landed, boatloads still making for the land, swarms trying to straighten themselves out along the shore, other groups digging and hacking down the brushwood. They did not look bigger than ants. God, one would think, cannot see them at all, or He would put a stop to this sort of panorama. And yet it would be a pity if He missed it, for these fellows have been worth the making. They are not charging up into this Sari Bair range for money or by compulsion. They fight for love—all the way from the Southern Cross for love of the Old Country and of liberty. Wave after wave of the little ants press up and disappear. We lose sight of them the moment they lie down. Bravo ! Every man on our great ship longs to be with them. But the main battle called. The Admiral was keen to take me when and where the need might most arise, so we turned south and steamed slowly back along the coast to Cape Helles.

OPPOSITE Krithia came another great moment. We have made good the landing ; it is a fact. I have to repeat the word to myself several times—"fact, fact, fact"—so as to be sure I am awake and standing here looking at live men through a long telescope. The thing seems unreal, as though we were in a dream, instead of on a battleship. To see words working themselves out upon the ground ; to watch thoughts move over the ground as fighting men . . .

Both battalions, the Plymouth Royal



TWENTY-THREE YEARS AFTER

Among the few great figures of the war who are alive today is General Sir Ian Hamilton. During a long life he saw much fighting and adventure, but no memories of his can be more clearly etched nor moving than those of Gallipoli.

Marines and the K.O.S.B.'s, had climbed the high cliff without loss—so it was signalled. There is no firing; the Turks have made themselves scarce. Nothing to show danger or stress; only parties of our men struggling up the sandy precipice by zigzags, carrying munitions and glittering kerosene tins of water. Through the telescope we can now make out a number of our fellows in groups along the crest of the cliff, probably smoking. This promises great results to our arms—not the smoking, for I hope that won't last long, but the enemy's surprise. In spite of Egypt and the Egyptian Gazette, we have brought off our tactical *coup*. The bulk of the Turks are not at Gaba Tepe; here, at "Y," there are none at all.

If the Australians get through to Mal Tepe the whole Turkish Army on the Peninsula will be done in. If this "Y" Beach lot press their advantage they may cut off the enemy troops on the toe of the Peninsula.

Braithwaite [General Sir Walter Braithwaite, G.C.B., Sir Ian Hamilton's Chief of Staff] has suggested that the Naval Division who are making a feint against the Bulair lines might be put in here to reinforce at "Y." The idea appeals to me very strongly, because I have been all along most keen on the "Y" Beach plan, my own special child; and this would be to make the most of it. But, until the main battle develops more clearly I must not commit the only troops I have in hand as my own reserve.

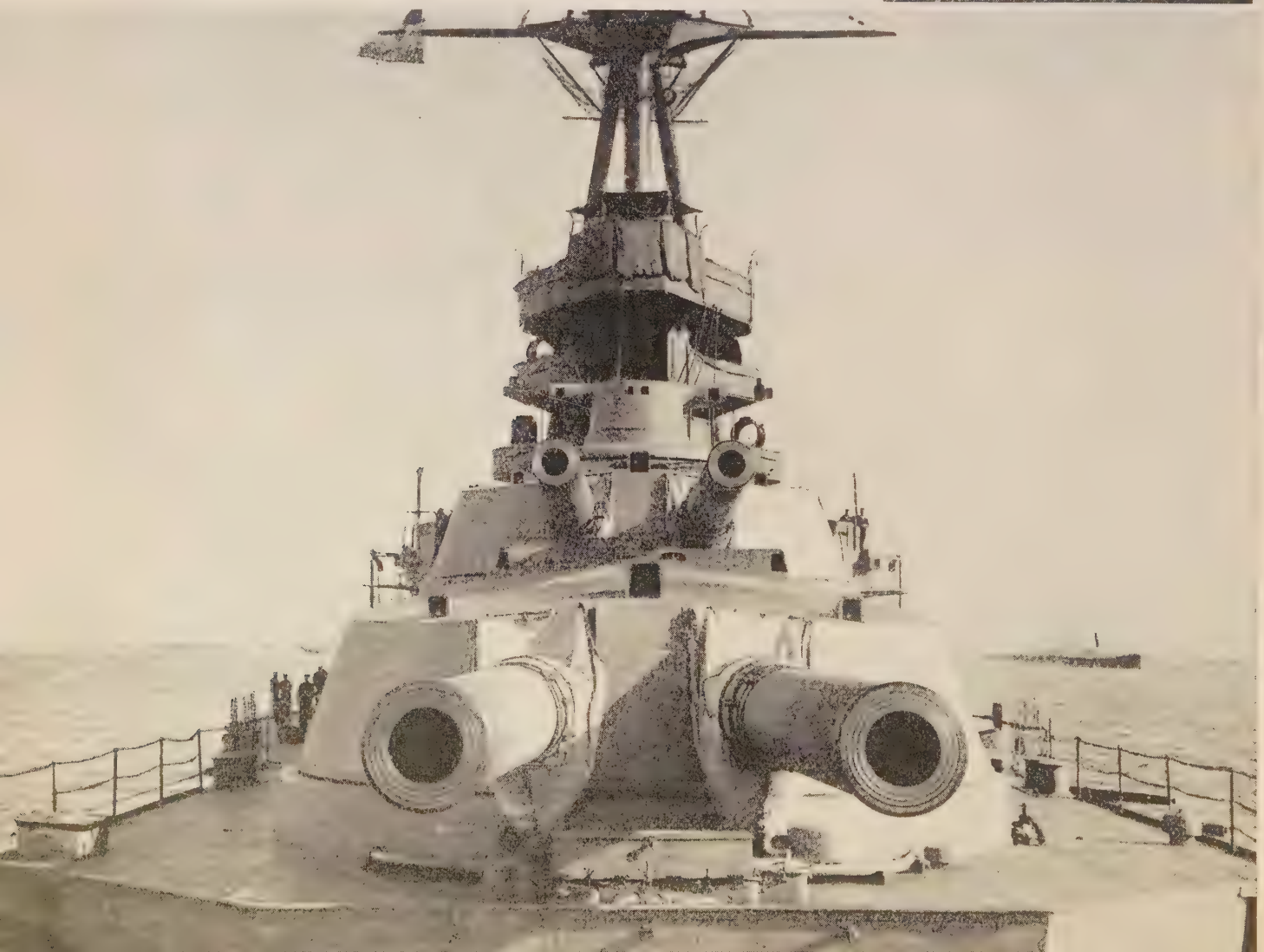
At "X" Beach the foreshore and cliffs have been made good without much loss, though there is a hot fight going on just south of it. But fresh troops will soon be landing—so far so good. Farther round, at "W" Beach, another lodgment has been effected; very desperate and bloody, we are told by the Naval Beachmaster; and indeed we can see some of the dead; but the Lancashire Fusiliers are in possession, though we don't seem yet to have



THE ADMIRAL AND HIS FLAGSHIP'S 'LOUDSPEAKERS'

On the right is Vice-Admiral Sir John de Robeck, who commanded the Allied fleet at Gallipoli and flew his flag in the Queen Elizabeth. Below is the fore turret of the flagship carrying four of her eight 15-in. guns. No other ship in the fleet carried such heavy guns, the Queen Elizabeth being the first British ship to be so armed. Their terrific roar as they shelled the enemy positions during the landings and subsequent attacks was a heartening sound to the troops ashore.

Photos, Russell and Imperial War Museum





'A BETTER HOLE' THAN THE FRONT LINE

This photograph shows a support trench in the Bois Grenier sector in the spring of 1915. Two enemies need no longer be feared—they are mud and rain—for trenches have improved vastly upon those shown in page 284, and these men of the 2nd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders are making themselves as comfortable as circumstances permit. They have a bucket fire, and newspapers, while the parapet is convenient for piling equipment superfluous in the welcome sunshine. "The Casino," as their temporary home is named, is therefore not so bad a hole for the moment

Imperial War Museum



THROUGH A HAIL OF LEAD TO LASTING GLORY—'THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE'

This illustration from a diorama in the Imperial War Museum is a complete reconstruction from official sources of the scene during the landing from the River Clyde, one of the greatest displays of indomitable bravery in the whole history of the human race. On the forecastle can be seen a pile of sandbags, part of the "many contrivances of defence" that Major Mure mentions in this chapter. Between the ship and the shore is the "blood-cemented bridge" of lighters and small boats over which Lieut.-Colonel Doughty-Wylie so gallantly led his men, only to be mown down by the hail of rifle and machine-gun fire from behind the barbed wire defences just above the beach. The immortal 2,000 were drawn from the Dublin Fusiliers, the Munster Fusiliers, the 2nd Hampshires, the Anson Battalion and the West Riding Field Company, Royal Engineers.



A CLOSE SHAVE FOR A POILU

Men of Britain's New Armies were mostly clean-shaven, for Tommy would have his shave even under the utmost difficulties. Here two British soldiers are removing the beard from a French comrade, one to lather and one to shave. Many men of the French Army let their beards grow, and the French word "poil" means "hairy." This man, though he sacrifices his beard, still retains the military moustache which justifies his honourable designation.



SHRAPNEL GULL
OF SINISTER
MEMORIE

A feature of the Gallipoli land
scape was its numerous gullies
Shrapnel Gully, seen in th
remarkable and little know
photograph, was one of th
wildest and ran between tw
hills covered with scrub. It wa
a famous spot on the Peninsul
for the sheltering of reserve
but the Turks knew this, an
it derived its ominous nam
from the frequent shelling t
which it was subjected. At th
head of it was "Quinn's Post,
which, as "Anzac" states i
Chapter 66, formed the key t
the whole position.

Central Press

penetrated inland. By Sedd el Bahr, where we hove to about 6.45, the light was very baffling; land wrapped in haze, sun full in our eyes. Here we watched as best we could over the fight being put up by the Turks against our forlorn hope on the River Clyde. Very soon it became clear that we were being held. Through our glasses we could quite clearly watch the sea being whipped up all along the beach and about the River Clyde by a pelting storm of rifle bullets.

We could see also how a number of our dare-devils were up to their necks in this tormented water trying to struggle on to land from the barges linking the River Clyde to the shore. There was a line of men lying flat down under cover of a little sandbank in the centre of the beach. They were so held under by fire they dared not, evidently, stir. Watching these gallant souls from the safety of a battleship gave me a hateful feeling; Roger Keyes said to me he simply could not bear it. Often a commander may have to watch tragedies from a post of safety. That is all right. I have had my share of the hair's-breadth business and now it becomes the turn of the youngsters. But, from the battleship, you are outside the frame of the picture. The thing becomes monstrous; too cold-blooded; like looking on at gladiators from the dress circle.

GUNS AND RIFLES NEVER CEASED

So soon as we saw that none of our men had made their way farther than a few feet above sea level, the Queen [Elizabeth] opened a heavy fire from her 6-inch batteries upon the Castle, the village and the high steep ground ringing round the beach in a semicircle. The enemy lay low. At times the River Clyde signalled that the worst fire came from the old Fort and Sedd el Bahr; at times that these bullets were pouring out from about the second highest rung of seats on the west of that amphitheatre in which we were striving to take our places. Ashore, the machine-guns and rifles never ceased—tic, tac, tic, tac, brrrr—tic, tac, tic, tac, brrrrrr . . . drowned every few seconds by our tremendous salvos, this more nervous noise kept creeping back insistently into our ears.

When we saw our "covering party" hung up between the Castle and the deep sea, we had to issue fresh orders to the main body. Useless to throw them ashore to increase the number of targets on the beach. Roger Keyes started the notion that these troops might well be diverted to "Y," where they could land unopposed, and whence, by threatening the Turkish line of retreat, they might help their advance guard at "V" more effectively than by direct reinforcement. The suggestion seemed simple common sense. If it did not suit Hunter-Weston's book [General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston, commanding the 29th Division] he had only to say so. Certainly he was in closer touch with all these landings than we were; it was not for me to force his hands—there was no question of that; so at 9.15 I wirelessed as follows:

"G.O.C. in C. to G.O.C. Euryalus.
"Would you like to get some more men ashore on 'Y' beach? If so, trawlers are available."

Three-quarters of an hour passed; the state of affairs at Sedd el Bahr was no better, and in an attack if you don't get better you get worse; the supports were not being landed; no answer had come to hand. So I repeated my signal to Hunter-Weston, making it this time personal from me to him and ordering him to acknowledge receipt (Lord Bobs' wrinkle):

"General Hamilton to General Hunter-Weston, Euryalus.
"Do you want any more men landed at 'Y'? There are trawlers available. Acknowledge the signal."

At 11 a.m. I got this answer:

"From General Hunter-Weston to G.O.C., Queen Elizabeth.
"Admiral Wemyss and Principal Naval Transport Officer state that to interfere with present arrangements and try to land men at 'Y' Beach would delay disembarkation."

H.M.S. Cornwallis ought to have been back from Morto Bay long ago. All sorts of surmises. Now we hear she has landed our right flank attack very dashingly, and that we have stormed de Tott's Battery. How I wish we had left "V" Beach severely alone! Big flanking attacks at "Y" and "S" might have converged on Sedd el Bahr and carried it from the rear, when none of the garrison could have escaped.

TURKS WERE DECEIVED

But then, until we tried, we were afraid fire from Asia might defeat the de Tott's Battery attack, and that the "Y" party might not scale the cliffs. I should doubt if the Turks are in any great force; quite clearly the bulk of them have been led astray by our feints and false rumours.

About noon, a naval officer (Lieutenant Smith), a fine fellow, came off to get some more small arm ammunition for the machine-guns on the River Clyde. He said the state of things on and around that ship was "awful": spoken by a youth now on his mettle to speak with calm, one felt he meant



CAPTAIN OF THE RIVER CLYDE
During the "forlorn hope of the River Clyde," as Sir Ian Hamilton calls it, Commander Edward Unwin was her captain and was awarded the V.C. for his heroic exertions during the landing. He is here seen later on when he was Beach Master at Suvla.
Imperial War Museum

"bloody." The whole landing-place at "V" Beach is ringed round with fire.

The shots from our naval guns, smashing as their impact appears, might as well be confetti for all the effect they have upon the trenches.

The River Clyde is commanded and swept by rifles at 100 yards' range. Her own double battery of machine-guns, mounted in a sandbag revetment in her bows, is preventing the enemy from actually rushing the little party of our men crouching behind the sandbank, but the sea at Sedd el Bahr has turned red.

At 1.30 heard that d'Amade [the French commander] holds Kum Kale. De Robeck had already heard independently by wireless that the French (the 6th Colonials under Nogués) had carried the village by a bayonet charge at 9.35 a.m. On the Asiatic side, then, all's well. The Russian Askold and the Jeanne d'Arc are supporting our Allies in their attack. Have told d'Amade that he will not be able to disembark at "V" as arranged, but that he will have to take his troops round to "W" and march them across.

At two o'clock a large number of our wounded who had taken refuge under the base of the arches of the old fort at Sedd el Bahr began to signal for help. The Queen Elizabeth sent away a picket boat which passed through the bullet



'V' BEACH HEROES AS THEIR OWN COMRADES SAW THEM

Imperial War Museum

Superb heroism and stark tragedy will be ever linked with Gallipoli, where in 1915 British troops fought with superhuman courage against most frightful odds. How they struggled through murderous and almost ceaseless fire to make a landing on "V" beach as a preliminary to an onslaught on the Turks is told in this chapter by General Sir Ian Hamilton. To his graphic words an added vividness is given by this remarkable photograph, taken from the River Clyde, which shows a party of Dublin Fusiliers on the shore sheltering behind a sandbank while aboard the lighter in the foreground the hapless dead and dying lie. In the background is seen the fortress of Sedd el Bahr

storm and most gallantly brought off the best part of them.

Soon after two o'clock we were cheered by sighting our own brave fellows making a push from the direction of "W." We reckon they must be Worcesters and Essex men, moving up to support the Royal Fusiliers and the Lancashire Fusiliers. The new lot came along by rushes from the westwards, and we prayed God very fervently they might be able to press on, so as to strike the right rear of the enemy troops encircling "V" Beach. At 3.10 the leading heroes—we were amazed at their daring—actually stood up, in order the better to cut through a broad belt of wire entanglement. One by one, the men passed through and fought their way to within a few yards of a redoubt dominating the hill between Beaches "W" and "V."

This belt of wire ran perpendicularly, not parallel, to the coastline, and had evidently been fixed up precisely to prevent what we were now about to attempt.

To watch V.C.'s being won by wire-cutting, to see the very figure and attitude of the hero, to be safe oneself except from the off-chance of a shell, was like being stretched upon the rack! All day we hung *vis-à-vis* this inferno.

With so great loss and with so desperate a situation, the white flag would have gone up in the South African War. But there was no idea of it today, and I don't feel afraid of it even now, in the dark of a moonless night, where evil thoughts are given most power over the mind.

I WAS LOADED WITH ANXIETY

Nor does Hunter-Weston. As we were snatching a hurried meal, he came on board. After he had told us his story, breathlessly and listened to with breathless interest, I asked him what about our troops at "Y"? He thought they were now in touch with our troops at "X," but that they had been through some hard fighting. His last message had been that they were being hard-pressed, but as he had heard nothing more since then, he assumed they were all right.

To sum up: the French have dealt a brilliant stroke at Kum Kale; we have fixed a grip on the hills to the north of Gaba Tepe; also, we have broken through the enemy's defences at "X" and "W," two out of the three beaches at the south point of the Peninsula. The "hold-up" at the third, "V" (or Sedd el Bahr), is bad—it would never do if we were forced to re-embark at night as has been suggested. The background of my mind is loaded with anxiety lest help should reach the enemy before we have done with Sedd el Bahr. The enveloping attacks on both enemy flanks have started brilliantly, but have not yet cut the enemy's line of retreat. At "S" (Morto Bay) the 2nd South Wales Borderers have landed under fire from big fortress artillery, as well as field guns and musketry. On shore they deployed and, helped by sailors from the Cornwallis, have stormed the Turkish trenches.

They are now dug in on a commanding spur, but say they do not feel strong enough to advance. From "Y," opposite Krithia, there is no further news. But two good battalions at large and on the war-path some four or five miles in rear of the enemy should do something during the next few hours.

THE FINEST SOLDIERS OF ALL

Whatever else may happen we have proved there are no other soldiers quite of the calibre of ours. They have esprit de corps; they are volunteers every one of them; they are for it; our officers—our rank and file—have been so *entered* to this attack that they will all die—that we will all die—sooner than give way before the Turk. The men are not fighting blindly as in South Africa, they are not fighting against forces with whose motives they half-sympathize. They have been told, and told again, exactly everything.

They understand. They *know* that the war can only be brought to an end by our joining hands quickly with the Russians; they *know* that the fate of the Empire depends on the courage they display. Should the Fates so decree, the whole brave army may disappear during the night more dreadfully than that of Sennacherib; but assuredly they will not surrender. Where so much is dark, where many are discouraged, in this knowledge I feel both light and joy.

As night began to settle down over the land, Queen Elizabeth seemed to feel the time had come to give full vent to her wrath. An order from the bridge, and, in the twinkling of an eye, she shook from stem to stern. The great ship is fighting all out, all in action. Every gun spouted flame and a roar goes up fit to shiver the stars of Heaven. Ears stopped with wax; eyes half-blinded by the scorching yellow blasts; still, in some chance seconds' interval we could hear the hive-like brr-rr-rr-rr-rr-r-r-r-r of the small arms playing on the shore; still see, through some break in the acrid smoke, the profile of the Castle and houses. Nay, of the very earth itself and the rocky cliff. See them all change, break, dissolve into dust, crumble as if by enchantment into strange new outlines under the enormous explosions of our 15-inch lyddite shells. Buildings gutted, walls and trenches turned inside out and upside down. Friend and foe surely must be wiped out together under such a fire—at least, they are stupefied, must cease taking a hand with their puny rifles and machine-guns? Not so.

Amidst falling ruins; under smoke clouds of yellow, black, green and white; the beach, the cliffs and the ramparts of the Castle began, in the on-coming dusk, to sparkle all over with hundreds of tiny flecks of rifle fire.

Many of our men who had been crouching all day under the sandy bank in the centre of the arena, were taking advantage of the pillars of smoke raised between them and their enemy to edge away to their right and scale the rampart leading to the Fort of Sedd el Bahr. Other small clusters lay still—they have made their last attack.

Now try to sleep. What of those men fighting for their lives in the darkness? Might they not, all of them, be sailing back to safe England, but for me? And I sleep! Well, why not, I *must* sleep whilst I may. The legend whereby a Commander-in-Chief works wonders during a battle dies hard. He may still lose the battle in a moment by losing heart. He may still win the battle by keeping a stiff upper lip. The old Bible idea of the Commander—when his hands grew heavy Amalek advanced, when he raised them Israel prevailed!

But nowadays, in precise proportion as his orders have been thorough, so will the actual conflict find him leaving the struggle to the troops. Old Oyama cooled his brain during the battle of the Shaho by shooting pigeons sitting on Chinese chimneys. My own dark hours pass more easily in making these jottings. Writing takes the strain off waiting. No order is to be issued until I get reports. I can't think now of anything left undone that I ought to have done. I have no more troops to lay my hands on—Hunter-Weston has more than he can land tonight. I won't win this battle by prowling up and down the gangways. No word yet about the losses, except that they have been heavy. If the Turks get hold of a lot of fresh men and throw them upon us during the night they may knock us off into the sea. No General knows his luck. That's the beauty of the business. But I feel sanguine all the same. The Turkish troops here will get no help tonight. And ours pour steadily ashore.



SHELL FIRE AND SHATTERED HOPES IN GALLIPOLI

These photographs well illustrate the results of the galling fire which the British Navy poured into the Turkish positions during the attempt to force the Dardanelles and the subsequent Gallipoli campaign. Above is a Turkish fort in the Dardanelles utterly destroyed by British naval guns. Below is a street in Chanak Kale, on the Asiatic shore of the Narrows, smashed by the guns of the Queen Elizabeth in the last attempt to thrust through to Constantinople, while left is a close-up view of the ruins of Sedd el Bahr, taken a month after the photograph reproduced in page 340.

Photos, Central Press, Imperial War Museum and Photopress





HEROIC FIASCO of 'Y' BEACH

Further Dark Hours of a Commander-in-Chief

by General Sir Ian Hamilton,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O.

SIR IAN HAMILTON in this chapter continues his classic description of the British landing on the Gallipoli peninsula. The brightest hopes of the Commander-in-Chief were destined to be rudely disappointed—and on this the second day of the adventure he describes the growing anxiety which he felt lest the whole adventure should turn into a complete fiasco

APRIL 26. *Queen Elizabeth.*

AT 12.5 a.m. I was dragged out of a dead sleep by Braithwaite [Gen. Sir W. Braithwaite], who kept shaking me by the shoulder and saying, "Sir Ian! Sir Ian!" I had been having a good time for an hour far away somewhere, far from bloody turmoil, and before I quite knew where I was, my Chief of Staff repeated what he had, I think, said several times already, "Sir Ian, you've got to come right along—a question of life and death—you must settle it!" Braithwaite is a cool hand, but his tone made me wide awake in a second. I sprang from bed; flung on my "British Warm," and crossed to the Admiral's cabin—not his own cabin but the dining-saloon—where I found de Robeck himself, Rear-Admiral Thursby (in charge of the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps), Roger Keyes, Braithwaite, Brigadier-General Carruthers (D.A. and Q.M.G. of the A. and N.Z. Corps), and Brigadier-General Cunliffe Owen (C.R.A. of the A. and N.Z. Corps). A cold hand clutched my heart as I scanned their faces. Carruthers gave me a message from Birdwood written in Godley's writing. I read it aloud:

"BOTH my Divisional Generals and Brigadiers have represented to me that they fear their men are thoroughly demoralized by shrapnel fire to which they have been subjected all day after exhaustion and gallant work in morning. Numbers have dribbled back from the firing line and cannot be collected in this difficult country. Even New Zealand Brigade which has been only recently engaged lost heavily and is to some extent demoralized. If troops are subjected to shell fire again tomorrow morning there is likely to be a fiasco as I have no fresh troops with which to replace those in firing-line. I know my representation is most serious, but if we are to re-embark it must be at once.—(*Sgd.*) BIRDWOOD."

The faces round that table took on a look—when I close my eyes there they sit—a look like nothing on earth unless it be the guests when their host flings salt upon the burning raisins. To gain time I asked one or two questions about the tactical position on shore, but Carruthers and Cunliffe Owen seemed unable to add any detail to Birdwood's general statement.

I TURNED to Thursby and said, "Admiral, what do you think?"

He said, "It will take the best part of three days to get that crowd off the beaches." "And where are the Turks?" I asked. "On the top of 'em."

"Well, then," I persisted, "tell me, Admiral, what do *you* think?"

"What do I think: well, I think myself they will stick it out if only it is put to them that they must." Without another word, all keeping silence, I wrote Birdwood as follows:

"Your news is indeed serious. But there is nothing for it but to dig yourselves right in and stick it out. It would take at least two days to re-embark you, as Admiral Thursby will explain to you. Meanwhile, the Australian submarine has got up through the Narrows and has torpedoed a gunboat at Chunuk. Hunter-Weston despite his heavy losses will be advancing tomorrow, which should divert pressure from you. Make a personal appeal to your men and Godley's to make a supreme effort to hold their ground.—(*Sgd.*) IAN HAMILTON."

"P.S.—You have got through the difficult business, now you have only to dig, dig, dig, until you are safe.—IAN H."

The deputation made off with this letter; new men carrying a clear order.

Be the upshot what it may, I shall never repent that order. Better to die on the enemy's ground than be butchered on the beaches like the runaway Persians at Marathon.

De Robeck and Keyes pat me on the back; will they go on doing so if things go horribly wrong? Midnight decisions take it out of one. Turned in and slept like a top till I was set spinning again at 4 a.m.

AT dawn the idea of retreat had retreated. The old Queen let fly her first shot at 5.30 a.m. Her shrapnel is a knockout. The explosion of the monstrous shell darkens the rising sun, the bullets cover an acre; the enemy seems stunned for a while after each discharge. One after the other Queen Elizabeth took on the Turkish guns along Sari Bair and swept the skyline with them.

A message of relief and thankfulness came out to us. Seeing how much they loved us—or rather our Long Toms—we hung around until about half-past eight smothering the enemy's guns whenever they dared show their snouts. By that hour our troops had regained their grip of themselves and also of the enemy. An organized counter-attack on the grand scale at dawn was the one thing I had dreaded, and that has not come off; only a bit of a push over the



HAMILTON'S CHIEF OF STAFF

Major-General Sir W. F. Braithwaite, Sir Ian Hamilton's Chief of Staff, who roused him on the fateful morning of April 26, is here seen, left, with his son, Captain V. Braithwaite, who was his A.D.C.

Imperial War Museum



Sport & General

'THE SOUL OF ANZAC'

Sir William Birdwood, who commanded the Australian and New Zealand troops in Gallipoli, is here seen at his headquarters on the upper bridge of H.M.S. Triumph. On account of his inspiring leadership he has been called "The Soul of Anzac."

downland by Gaba Tepe which was steadied by one of our enormous shrapnel.

We hear there is no change at Helles and Sedd el Bahr. Somewhere about 9. a.m, we picked up a wireless from the O.C. "Y" Beach which caused us some uneasiness. "We are holding the ridge," it said, "till the wounded are embarked." Why "till"? So I told the Admiral that as Birdwood seemed fairly comfortable, we ought to lose no time getting back to Sedd el Bahr, taking "Y" Beach on our way. At once we steamed south and hove to off "Y" Beach at 9.30 a.m. There the Sapphire, Dublin and Goliath were lying close inshore, and we could see a trickle of our men coming down the steep cliff and parties being ferried off to the Goliath; the wounded no doubt, but we did not see a single soul going *up* the cliff, whereas there were many loose groups hanging about on the beach. I mistrusted these dawdlers by the sea. There was no fighting; a rifle-shot now and then from the crests where we saw our fellows clearly.

THE little crowd and the boats on the beach were right under them and no one paid any attention to us or seemed to be in a hurry. Our naval and military signallers were at sixes and sevens. The Goliath wouldn't answer; the Dublin said the force was coming off, and we could not get into touch with the soldiers at all.

At about a quarter to ten the Sapphire asked us to fire over the cliffs into the country some hundreds of yards farther in, and so the Queen E. gave Krithia and the south of it a taste of her metal. Not much use, as the high cliffs hid the intervening hinterland from view, even from the crow's nests. A couple of shrapnel were also fired at the crestline of the cliff about half a mile farther north where there appeared to be some snipers. But the trickling down the cliffs continued. No one liked the look of things ashore. Our chaps can hardly be making off in this deliberate way without orders; and yet, if they *are* making off "by order," Hunter-Weston ought to have consulted me first as Birdwood consulted me last night.

THE Staff are clear against interference when I have no knowledge of the facts—and I suppose they are right. But, to see a part of my scheme, from which I had hoped so much, go wrong before my eyes is maddening! I imagined it; I pressed it through; a second battalion was added to it, and then the South Wales Borderers' company. Many sailors and soldiers, good men, had doubts as to whether the boats could get in, or whether, having done so, men armed and accoutred would be able to scale the yellow cliffs; or whether, having by some miracle climbed, they would not be knocked off with bayonets as they got to the top. I admitted each of these possibilities, but said that, taken together, they destroyed one another.

WE ARE DESPERADOES

IF the venture seemed so desperate even to ourselves, who are desperadoes, then the enemy chief would be of the same opinion, only more so; so that, supposing we *did* get up, at least we would not find resistance organized against us. Whether this was agreed to or not, the logic of a C.-in-C. has a convincing way of its own. But in all our discussions one thing was taken for granted—no one doubted that once our troops had got ashore, scaled the heights and dug themselves in, they would be able to hold on; no one doubted that, with the British Fleet at their backs, they would at least maintain their bridge-head into the enemy's vitals until we could decide what to do with it.

At a quarter-past ten we steamed for Cape Helles, whilst I, with anxiety gnawing at me, wrote my first operations cable to K. [Lord Kitchener]:

"Thanks to God who calmed the seas and to the Royal Navy who rowed our fellows ashore as coolly as if at a regatta; thanks also to the dauntless spirit shown by all ranks of both Services, we have landed 29,000 upon six beaches in the face of desperate resistance from strong Turkish infantry forces well backed by artillery. Enemy are entrenched, line upon line, behind wire entanglements spread to catch us wherever we might try to concentrate for an advance. Worst danger zone, the open sea, now traversed, but on land not yet out of the wood. Our main covering detachment held up on water's edge, at foot of amphitheatre of low cliffs round the little bay west of Sedd el Bahr. At sunset last night a dashing attack was made by the 29th Division south-west along the heights from Tekke Burnu to set free the Dublins, Munsters and Hants, but at the hour of writing they are still pinned down to the beach.

COOL, CONFIDENT AUSTRALIANS

"THE Australians have done wonderfully at Gaba Tepe. They got 8,000 ashore to one beach between 3.30 a.m. and 8.30 a.m.; due to their courage, organization, sea discipline and steady course of boat practice. Navy report not one word spoken or movement made by any of these thousands of untried troops either during the transit over the water in the darkness or nearing the land when the bullets took their toll. But, as the keel of the boats touched bottom, each boat-load dashed into the water and then into the enemy's fire.

"At first it seemed that nothing could stop them, but by degrees wire, scrub and cliffs; thirst, sheer exhaustion broke the back of their impetus. Then the enemy's howitzers and field guns had it all their own way, forcing attack to yield a lot of ground. Things looked anxious for a bit, but by this morning's dawn all are dug in, cool, confident.

"But for the number and good shooting of Turkish field guns and howitzers, Birdwood would surely have carried the whole main ridge of Sari Bair. As it is, his troops are holding a long curve upon the crests of the lower ridges, identical, to a hundred yards, with the line planned by my General Staff in their instructions and pencilled by them upon the map.

"The French have stormed Kum Kale and are attacking Yeni Shahr. Although you excluded Asia from my operations, have been forced by tactical needs to ask

d'Amade to do this and so relieve us from artillery fire from the Asiatic shore.

"Deeply regret to report the death of Brigadier-General Napier, and to say that our losses, though not yet estimated, are sure to be very heavy.

"If only this night passes without misadventures, I propose to attack Achi Baba tomorrow with whatever Hunter-Weston can scrape together of the 29th Division. Such an attack should force the enemy to relax their grip on Sedd el Bahr. I can look now to the Australians to keep any enemy reinforcements from crossing the waist of the Peninsula."

[This was my original draft; it was slightly condensed for ciphering home. —Ian H., 1920.]

Relief from Gaba Tepe is almost swallowed up by the "Y" Beach fiasco—as we must, I suppose, take it to be. At Helles things seem much the same as last night. No word from Hunter-Weston. Passed Cape Helles at 12.20 p.m. Weather now much brighter and warmer. At "Y" Beach the re-embarkation of troops was still going on. All quiet, the Goliath says: "the enemy was so roughly handled in an attack they made last night that they do not trouble our withdrawal." Too pleased to see us go, it seems! So this part of our plan has gone clean off the rails. De Robeck agrees that we don't know enough yet to warrant



GALLIPOLI — WHERE 30,000 MEN DIED

This bird's-eye view map shows the area in which the British and French forces landed on April 25, 1915, and the principal places mentioned in the chapters on the Gallipoli campaign. It is in perspective but the scale can be judged by the fact that the distance between Cape Helles and Suvla Point is approximately 20 miles.



THESE WERE THE FIRST TURKISH PRISONERS

Here are some of the first Turkish prisoners to be taken in Gallipoli. In one sense prisoners taken during the campaign were always troublesome, for there were no prison camps on the Peninsula and therefore they had to be taken to Alexandria on board the ships that passed to and fro with supplies for the troops. In the foreground are some of the many mules that were invaluable for transport over country where there were few roads.

Sport & Genera

intervention, but my orders ought to have been taken before a single fit officer or man was ferried back aboard ship. Never, since modern battles were invented by the Devil, has a Commander-in-Chief been so accessible to a message from any part of his force. Each theatre has its outfit of signallers, wireless, etc., and I can answer, or, send help, or rush myself upon the scene at twenty-five miles an hour with the Q.E.'s fifteen-inchers in my pocket. Here there is no question of emergency. . . .

Whilst having a hurried meal, Jack Churchill rushed down from the crow's-nest to say that he thought we had carried the fort above Sedd el Bahr. He had seen through a powerful naval glass some figures standing erect and silhouetted against the sky on the parapet. Only, he argued, British soldiers would choose the sky-line to stand against during a battle. That is so.

On to Gaba Tepe, just in time to see the collapse of the dreaded Turkish counter-attack. The Turks have been attacking all the time, but this is—or, rather, I can happily now say "was"—an organized effort to burst in through our centre. No doubt the panorama was alarming, but we all of us—we on the Q.E.—felt sure that Australia and New Zealand had pulled themselves together and were going to give socks to Enver and his army.

The nightmares of the might-have-beens add brightness to the morning. Imagine, had these brave lads entrusted to us by the Commonwealth and Dominion now been penned in upon the beaches, crowding into their boats, whilst some desperate rearguard was trying to hold off the onrush of the triumphant Turks!

Here come the Turks! First a shower of shells, dropping all along the lower ridges and out over the Bay. Very pretty, the shells—at half a mile! Prince of Wales' feathers, springing suddenly out of the blue to a loud hammer-stroke; or else the shrapnel, pure white, twisting a moment and pirouetting as children in their night-gowns pirouette, then gliding off the field two or three together, an aerial ladies' chain.

Next our projectiles; over the sea they flew; over the heads of our fighters; covered the higher hillsides and skyline with smudges of black, yellow and green. Smoky fellows these—with a fiery spark at their core, and wherever they touch the earth, rocks leap upwards in columns of dust to the sky. Under so many savage blows the labouring mountains brought forth Turks.

Here and there advancing lines, dots moving over green patches; dots following one another across a broad red scar on the flank of Sari Bair; others following, and yet others and others and others, closing in, disappearing, reappearing in close waves converging on the central and highest part of our position. The tic-tac of the machine-guns: we have got some guns right up the precipitous cliff. The noise doubled, redoubled, quadrupled, expanded into one immense tiger-like growl. A solid mass of the enemy crossing the green patch, and then the good Queen Lizzie picked up her targets—crash!!! Where are they now? . . .

At 4.30 we left Gaba Tepe and sailed for Helles. At 4.50 we were opposite Krithia, passing "Y" Beach. Troops, wounded, gear, have all vanished. Only the petrol tins they took for water shine still, huge diamonds in the evening sun. The enemy let them slip off without a shot fired. The last boat-load got aboard the Goliath at 4 p.m., but they had forgotten some of their kit, so the blue-jackets rowed ashore as they might to Southsea pier and brought it off for them; and again no shot fired!

Hove to off Cape Helles at quarter-past five. Joyous confirmation of Sedd el Bahr capture, and our lines run straight across from "X" to Morto Bay. . . .

At 6.20 p.m. started back, intending to see all snug at Gaba Tepe; but, picking up some Turkish guns as targets in Krithia and on the slopes of Achi Baba, we hove to off Cape Tekke and opened fire. We soon silenced these guns, though others, unseen, kept popping. At 6.50 we ceased fire. At seven Admiral Guépratte came on board and tells us splendid news about Kum Kale. At 2 o'clock the artillery fire from shore and ships became too hot for the Turks entrenched in the cemetery, and they put up the white flag and came in as prisoners, 500 of them. A hundred more had been taken during the night fighting, but there was treachery and some of those were killed. Kum Kale has been a brilliant bit of work, though I fear we have lost nearly a quarter of our effectives. Guépratte agrees we would do well to hold on for another twenty-four hours. At a quarter-past seven he took his leave, and we let drop our anchor where we were, off Cape Tekke.

So now the price has been paid for the first step, and that is the step that counts. Blood, sweat, fire—with these we have forged our master key and forced it into the lock of the Hellespont, rusty and dusty with centuries of disuse. Grant us, O Lord, tenacity to turn it, till through that open door Queen Elizabeth of England sails East for the Golden Horn!







Photos, Central Press

'W' BEACH, SCENE OF THE FINEST HEROISM IN AN ARMY OF HEROES

The centre photograph of "W" Beach was taken on April 26, the day after the landing of the Lancashire Fusiliers, of which Admiral Wemyss said "I cannot conceive . . . a finer exhibition of heroism." Here the beach has been won and troops are still coming ashore in support of the gallant Lancashires. Close indoors are drifters and some of the lighters which brought the troops ashore from the warships and transports. At the top of the page is a photograph of "W" Beach after the enemy had been driven back and a camp was established there. It shows the cliffs up which the men who first landed had to climb in face of a galling fire. The bottom photograph gives another view of part of the camp with a pile of equipment at the top of the cliff.

WHEN Our DEAD CLOGGED Our TRENCHES

The Turkish Attack on Dead Man's Ridge

by 'Anzac'

THE author, a New Zealand sapper who remains anonymous, took part in the Anzac landing on April 25. He continues the story of the Gallipoli campaign to the third day, when the Turks made the most determined effort to drive the British into the sea. It is a ghastly but memorable account of one of the fiercest days of fighting of the whole Great War

IT was on Tuesday, April 27, that Enver Pasha launched the attack against our lines that was to drive us into the sea. All through Monday and Monday night our transports were landing fresh troops under heavy and constant shelling from the Turkish big guns; under cover of the darkness these troops were marched up and placed, some in the fire trenches to fill up the many gaps caused by the enemy's shrapnel and machine-guns, others massed in reserve at the base of the cliff. Yet not a man of those who had stormed the position the first day, and who had been hard at it ever since, could be spared from the front line. Come to think, I don't fancy a single one would have left it. The feeling had got abroad that the change was going to be taken out of the Turks this time (it had leaked out that the big attack would certainly take place on Monday night or Tuesday morning), and the chaps were fair mad to get a bit of their own back. They did, too.

OUR position as finally formed extended along the very crest, or rim, of the cliff for a distance of about two miles, or rather better. Here and there deep gullies, or canyons, ran into and cut the line, or caused the line to "bulge" considerably towards the enemy. Such was "Shrapnel Gully" (*see* page 338), at the head of which lay "Quinn's Post," where our trenches had to be pushed perilously forward owing to the configuration of the ground. "Quinn's Post," in fact, formed the key to the whole position; it lay right in the centre of the line, and had it been carried the whole bag of tricks would, in my opinion, have crumpled up badly and a big disaster might have occurred. When your centre is pierced it's no picnic. To the left of "Quinn's" was "Dead Man's Ridge," held by the Turks, from which they were able to snipe right down "Shrapnel Gully"—and, incidentally, our camps and dug-outs. . . . No man was safe from those snipers; they seemed to be everywhere—before, alongside, and *behind* our lines even. Hence no supplies could be brought up in daylight; everything had to be done at night when there was only shell-fire to worry about. Afterwards we got those snipers fossicked out (they met strange deaths sometimes!), but meantime our life wasn't anything to hanker after.

Had the enemy only succeeded in pushing us over the rim of the ridge, nothing would have saved us. Below lay the open beach. We couldn't possibly have been taken off with the heights in the hands of the Turks. I guess it would have been one of the biggest and finest wipe-outs in history. Old Enver Pasha thought it would look jolly well in the morning papers, I expect. Anyway, he had no end of a hard try—and, to give him and his men their due, I don't mind admitting that they weren't so very far from succeeding.

I don't pretend to describe that struggle. No man could. It was grit, tenacity and gameness opposed to overwhelming numbers. A battle of giants. It was sickening; brutal—and yet splendid.

Men fought that day stripped to the waist; fought till their rifles jammed, picked up another—and went on fighting. Men with broken legs refused to leave the trench, cursing those who would have assisted them—went on firing until a second bullet crippled their rifle arm. Yet still they clung on, handing up clips of cartridges to their mates, all the time imploring them to "give the sons of —— hell!"

THEY weren't Sunday-school models, those big-hearted, happy-go-lucky toughs from the Back of Beyond. But they knew how to fight—and die. They were men right through, not kid-glove soldiers. They lived hard, fought hard, and died hard. And what if they did die with curses on their lips! Who shall dare to judge them, dying as *they* died? And it may be that the Big Padre up aloft turned a deaf ear to those oaths begotten of the life they had lived—or perhaps He failed to hear them in the noise of battle!

The Turks attacked gamely, like the big, brave soldiers they are and always were. Led by their splendid officers, they came on in masses, shoulder to shoulder, and did all that in them lay to rush our trenches. They were met by a storm of bullets that would have staggered anything born of woman.

IT did stagger them; they recoiled before that leaden blast that piled their dead and wounded up in ghastly heaps and ridges like broken-down walls—before that smashing fire delivered at twenty yards range. They recoiled—yes. But run—no! They charged, charged right through that hurricane of machine-gun and rifle fire—charged right up to our parapets.

And now it was our turn. Like one man the colonial infantry leaped from their cover. Crash! They were into the Turks. Followed a wild hurly-burly of hacking and stabbing while one might count twenty slowly; then the enemy were beaten back, and the defenders ran, limped, and crawled back to their trenches and took to their rifles again.

Thus it went on from before dawn till towards evening. Charge and counter



TURKEY'S GENERALISSIMO

Turkish Imperial War Minister and Generalissimo during the war, Enver Pasha, who in the Young Turk revolt in 1908 and during the Balkan and Tripoli Wars had won fame, was at the age of 32 appointed to his high office. He was supported in his task mainly by Marshal Liman von Sanders.



Central Press

THE FIRST GUNS IN GALLIPOLI

One of the great difficulties of the Gallipoli campaign was the question of artillery. The water inshore was so shallow that all guns and munitions had to be landed from the transports on lighters, and the steep cliffs at the western extremity of the Peninsula made it impossible to get many big guns into position. Above is one of the first pieces of artillery to be landed. For heavy artillery the Army depended chiefly on the Navy, and the accuracy of fire by the ships at long range was remarkable.

charge, till men reeled from sheer exhaustion, and their blood-clotted weapons slipped from hands sticky with the same red paint. I am not exaggerating; those who were present on that awful Tuesday will bear me out.

We were hard pressed. The strongest men in the world are only human. Loss of sleep, insufficient food, and practically no water, combined with the exertions we had already gone through, began to tell their tale. Our losses were also very heavy; and owing to the slippery state of the clay soil, following on an all-night of rain, our reserves could not get up quickly enough.

THUS yards and yards of trench were at times empty of all save dead and wounded men, and in some cases the Turks effected a footing in them; they were always driven out again, however, or bayoneted to a man. Our fellows were simply magnificent; budge they would not. To capture those trenches meant the killing of the men who held them; you couldn't *drive* them out. And the officers were just the same.

But it was cruel to hear the continual cries of:

"Stretcher bearers! Stretcher bearers to the right!"

"Stretcher bearers to the left!"

"Ammunition! Send up ammunition! We haven't a——round here!"

"Reinforce! For God's sake reinforce! They're into No. 8! Christ, boys, get a move on!"

At this time we had neither support trenches nor communications—just one thin line, which, if broken, meant the loss of the ridge with all that that meant. We were also so clogged up with dead in our trenches that to make room for the living we had to throw the bodies out over the back. In many cases where our line was cut on the edge of the ridge these bodies rolled right down to the foot of the cliff.

At "Quinn's Post" things were about as bad as they could be. There was only the merest apology for a track from the "Gully" up to the trenches situated on the very lip of the crest, and at one time when reinforcements were making their way in single file up this track they had to scramble in and out, through and over, dead men lying tossed about anyhow, while all the way right down to the valley the wounded were lying "heads and tails" awaiting transport to the beach. It wasn't the most encouraging sight in the world for the fellows coming up straight off the transports.

In one place quite a little stack of bodies had been huddled together to one side of the track; there might have been eighteen or twenty in the lot. Owing to the water running down this stack began to move, and kept on moving till it blocked the track up altogether. I don't know how many chaps tumbled into that heap and got tied up in it, but eventually a fatigue party had to be told off to build up the bodies as you would build sheaves on a wagon. We had no time to bury our dead for the first few days—and in that climate you don't want to keep them above ground for many *hours*.

AS the day wore on it became evident that the Turks had shot their bolt. The attack died down, then ceased altogether, and save for the heavy rifle and artillery fire they kept up on our trenches, we weren't troubled by them for some time. They had lost tremendously; the ground along our front looked like a heavy crop of wheat after the binder had been through it—either 4,000 or 7,000 dead lay there. (And they lay there unburied for *three weeks*.) At last we were able to get a little sorely needed rest. We had been pushed to the extremest limit of human endurance.



MENIN, THE GATE OF ENDLESS AND UNDYING MEMORIES

Past the debris of the Menin Gate hordes of British soldiers marched to the horror of the salient at Ypres. Above is shown a photograph taken along that frightful causeway when remnants of houses still remained, in May 1915. Below is a scene from within the great memorial that stands at Ypres today, in honour of the thousands of British fighting men who fell in that shell-scoured salient.

Photos, Imperial War Museum, and A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.



SECTION X

Ypres: The Second Battle

April 22 — May 7, 1915

TOWARDS the end of April the Germans made a further determined effort to break through the Ypres salient and force their way on to the Channel ports. ¶ On this occasion they made their first use of poison gas, which at first caused widespread demoralization amongst the Allied defenders. By a miracle of endurance the line was again saved. ¶ The story of Second Ypres is told in this section by Colonel McCrae, famous author of "In Flanders Fields," Lord Beaverbrook who, as Sir Max Aitken, was with the Canadians, by A. R. Hossack, of the Q.V.R.'s, and by a famous author and archaeologist, Stanley Casson, who served with the E. Lancs. ¶ During the period the world was shocked by the news of the sinking of the Lusitania. That dreadful disaster is described in the words of a most distinguished survivor, Viscountess Rhondda.

★ 67 April 23—25, 1915

A POET Encounters TRAGEDY

The Horror of Second Ypres

by Lieut.-Colonel John McCrae, M.D.

Author of 'In Flanders Fields'

Friday, April 23, 1915.

As we moved up last evening there was heavy firing about 4.30 on our left, the hour at which the general attack with gas was made when the French line broke. We could see the shells bursting over Ypres, and in a small village to our left, meeting General ——, C.R.A. of one of the divisions, he ordered us to halt for orders. We sent forward notifications to our headquarters, and sent out orderlies to get in touch with the batteries of the farther forward brigades already in action. . . . . They had a tough time, but got away safely and did wonderful service. One battery fired in two opposite directions at once, and both batteries fired at point-blank, open sights, at Germans in the open. They were at times quite without infantry on their front, for their position was behind the French to the left of the British line.

As we sat on the road we began to see the French stragglers—men without fire-arms, wounded men, teams, wagons, civilians, refugees—some by the roads, some across country, all talking, shouting—the very picture of débâcle. I must say they were the "tag-enders" of a fighting line rather than the line itself. They streamed on, an dshouted to us scraps of not too inspiriting information while we stood and took our medicine, and picked out gun positions in the fields in case we had to go in there and then. The men were splendid—not a word; not a shake; and it was a terrific test. Traffic whizzed by—ambulances, transport, ammunition, supplies, dispatch riders—and the shells thundered into the town, or burst high in the air nearer us, and the refugees screamed. Women, old men, little children, hopeless, tearful, quiet or excited, tired, dodging the traffic—and the wounded in singles or in groups. Here and there I could give a momentary help, and the ambulances picked up as they could. So the cold moonlight night wore on—no change save that the towers of Ypres showed up against the glare of the city burning; and the shells still sailed in.

At 9.30 our ammunition column (the part that had been "in") appeared. Major —— had waited, like Casabianca, for orders until the Germans were 500 yards away; then he started, getting safely away save for one wagon lost and some casualties in men and horses. He found our column, and we prepared to send forward ammunition as soon as we could learn where the batteries had taken up position in retiring, for retire they had to. Eleven, twelve, and finally grey day broke, and we still waited. At 3.45 word came to go in and support a French counter-attack at 4.30 a.m. Hastily we got the order spread; it was 4 a.m. and three miles to go.

Of one's feelings all this night—of the asphyxiated French soldiers—of the women and children—of the cheery, steady British reinforcements that moved up quietly past us, going up, not back—I could write, but you can imagine.

We took the road at once, and went up at the gallop. The colonel rode ahead to scout a position (we had only four guns, part of the ammunition column, and the brigade staff; the 1st and 4th Batteries were back in reserve at our last billet). Along the roads we went and made our place on time, pulled up for ten minutes just short of the position, where I put Bonfire [his horse] with my groom in a farmyard, and went forward on foot—only a quarter of a mile or so—then we advanced. Bonfire had soon to move; a shell killed a horse about four yards away from him, and he wisely took other ground. Meantime we went on into the position we were to occupy for seventeen days, though we could not guess that. I can hardly say more than that it was near the Yser Canal.

We got into action at once, under heavy gunfire. We were to the left entirely of the British line, and behind French troops, and so we remained for eight days. A colonel of the R.A., known to fame, joined us and camped with us; he was our link with the French headquarters, and was in local command of the guns in this locality. When he left us eight days later he said, "I am glad to get out of this hell-hole." He was a great comfort to us, for he was very capable, and the entire battle was largely fought "on our own," following the requests of the infantry on our front, and scarcely guided by our own staff at all.

We at once set out to register our targets, and almost at once had to get



GUNNER, DOCTOR AND POET

This distinguished Canadian, Colonel John McCrae, a Boer War gunner, did magnificent service as a medical officer. Author of the famous war poem "In Flanders Fields," he died in January 1918. In the second battle of Ypres he was attached to the 1st Brigade, Canadian Artillery.

RAMPARTS OF YPRES—
THEN AND NOW

Ypres was four or five times besieged in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the ancient Ramparts and Moat, which had once been held against Alva's soldiers, formed an important part in the British defences. Above is a section of the Ramparts near the Menin Gate, in 1915, but against the hurricane of shells that the Germans rained upon them, the defences had to be reinforced by sandbags and dug-outs. Below is the other side of the Ramparts, showing the tranquil waters of the Moat as they are today.

Photos, Imperial War Museum, and A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.





into steady firing on quite a large sector of front. We dug in the guns as quickly as we could, and took as headquarters some infantry trenches already sunk on a ridge near the canal. We were subject from the first to a steady and accurate shelling, for we were all but in sight, as were the German trenches about 2,000 yards to our front. At times the fire would come in salvos quickly repeated. Bursts of fire would be made for ten or fifteen minutes at a time. We got all varieties of projectile, from 3-inch to 8-inch, or perhaps 10-inch ; the small ones usually as air bursts, the larger percussion and air, and the heaviest percussion only.

MY work began almost from the start—steady but never overwhelming, except perhaps once for a few minutes. A little cottage behind our ridge served as a cook-house, but was so heavily hit the second day that we had to be chary of it. During bursts of fire I usually took the back slope of the sharply crested ridge for what shelter it offered. At three our 1st and 4th arrived, and went into action at once a few hundred yards in our rear. Wires were at once put out, to be cut by shells hundreds and hundreds of times, but always repaired by our indefatigable lineman. So the day wore on ; in the night the shelling still kept up. Three different German attacks were made and repulsed. If we suffered by being close up, the Germans suffered from us, for already tales of good shooting came down to us. I got some sleep, despite the constant firing ; for we had none last night.

Saturday, April 24, 1915.

BEHOLD us now anything less than two miles north of Ypres on the west side of the canal. This runs north, each bank flanked with high elms, with bare trunks of the familiar Netherlands type. A few yards to the west a main road runs, likewise bordered. The Censor will allow me to say that on the high bank between these we had our headquarters. The ridge is, perhaps, fifteen to twenty feet high, and slopes forward fifty yards to the water. The back is more steep and slopes quickly to a little subsidiary waterway, deep but dirty.

Where the guns were I shall not say ; but they were not far, and the German aeroplanes that viewed us daily with all but impunity knew very well. A road crossed over the canal and interrupted the ridge ; across the road from us was our billet—the place we cooked in, at least, and where we usually took our meals. Looking to the south, between the trees, we could see the ruins of the city : to the front on the skyline, with rolling ground in the front, pitted by French trenches, the German lines ; to the left front, several farms and a windmill, and farther left, again near the canal, thicker trees and more farms. The farms and windmills were soon burnt. Several farms we used for observing posts were also quickly burnt during the next three or four days. All along behind us at varying distances French and British guns ; the flashes at night lit up the sky.

These high trees were at once a protection and a danger. Shells that struck them were usually destructive. When we came in the foliage was still very thin. Along the road, which was constantly shelled " on spec " by the Germans, one saw all the sights of war : wounded men, limping or carried, ambulances, trains of supply, troops, army mules, and tragedies.

I saw one bicycle orderly : a shell exploded and he seemed to pedal on for eight or ten revolutions and then collapsed in a heap—dead. Straggling soldiers would be killed or wounded, horses also, until it got to be a nightmare.



IN THE DAYS BEFORE DEVASTATION

The destruction of the country round Ypres was slow but terribly sure. Here is a typical Belgian road near Vlamertinghe in March 1915, about a month before the beginning of the second battle of Ypres. As the tall poplars still standing show, it has not yet been under heavy fire, and the Army traffic, all that it now carries, passes along undisturbed. It was soon to be the scene of fierce fighting, for though Vlamertinghe never fell into enemy hands, the village and the surrounding country suffered complete devastation.

Imperial War Museum



L.N.A.

OUR HORSES, TOO, WERE HEROES

Lt. Col. McCrae's wish that he could have assured the "good old horses" of a peaceful pasture once more could not be fulfilled, for the casualties in the artillery and transport were heavy. But the Army Veterinary Corps worked heroically to relieve the suffering, with careful attention to small wounds and injuries, and a painless death for those beyond hope. Here a sergeant of the Army Veterinary Corps is sewing up a wound in a horse's nose.

I used to shudder every time I saw wagons or troops on that road. My dug-out looked out on it. I got a square hole, eight by eight, dug in the side of the hill (west), roofed over with remnants to keep out the rain, and a little sandbag parapet on the back raised so as to prevent pieces of "back-kick shells" from coming in, or prematures from our own or the French guns for that matter. Some straw on the floor completed it.

The ground was treacherous, and a slip the first night nearly buried ——. So we had to be content with walls straight up and down, and trust to the height of the bank for safety. All places along the bank were more or less alike—all squirrel holes.

THIS morning we supported a heavy French attack at 4.30. There had been three German attacks in the night, and everyone was tired. We got heavily shelled.

In all, some eight or ten of our trees were cut by shells—cut right off, the upper part of the tree subsiding heavily and straight down, as a usual thing. One would think a piece about a foot long was just instantly cut out, and these trees were about eighteen inches in diameter.

The gas fumes came very heavily: some blew down from the infantry trenches, some came from the shells. One's eyes smarted, and breathing was very laboured. Up to noon today we fired 2,500 rounds. Last night Colonel Morrison and I slept at a French colonel's headquarters near by, and in the night our room was filled up with wounded. I woke up and shared my bed with a chap with "a wounded leg and a chill." Probably thirty wounded men were brought into the one little room.

Colonel ——, R.A., kept us in communication with the French general in whose command we were. I bunked down in the trench on the top of the ridge. The sky was red with the glare of the city still burning, and we could hear the almost constant procession of large shells sailing over from our left front into the city. The crashes of their explosion shook the ground where we were. After a terribly hard day, professionally and otherwise, I slept well; but it rained and the trench was awfully muddy and wet.

Sunday, April 25, 1915.

The weather brightened up and we got at it again. This day we had several heavy attacks, prefaced by heavy artillery fire. These bursts of fire would result in our getting 100 to 150 rounds right on us or near by. The heavier our fire (which was on the trenches entirely), the heavier theirs.

OUR food supply came up at dusk in wagons, and the water was any we could get; but, of course, treated with chloride of lime. The ammunition had to be brought down the roads at the gallop, and the more firing the more wagons. The men would quickly carry the rounds to the guns, as the wagons had to halt behind our hill. The good old horses would swing around at the gallop, pull up in an instant and stand puffing and blowing, but with their heads up, as if to say, "Wasn't that well done?" It makes you want to kiss their dear old noses and assure them of a peaceful pasture once more. Today we got our dressing-station dug-out complete, and we slept there at night.

Three farms in succession burned on our front—colour in the otherwise dark. The flashes of shells over the front and rear in all directions. The city still burning and the procession still going on. I dressed a number of French wounded; one Turco prayed to Allah and Mohammed all the time I was dressing his wound. On the front field one can see the dead lying here and there, and in places where an assault has been they lie very thick on the front slopes of the German trenches. Our telephone wagon team hit by a shell; two horses killed and another wounded. I did what I could for the wounded one and he subsequently got well.

THIS night, beginning after dark, we got a terrible shelling which kept up till two or three in the morning. Finally I got to sleep, though it was still going on. We must have got a couple of hundred rounds, in singles or pairs. Every one burst over us, would light up the dug-out, and every hit in front would shake the ground and bring down small bits of earth on us, or else the earth thrown into the air by the explosion would come spattering down on our roof and into the front of the dug-out. Colonel Morrison tried the mess-house, but the shelling was too heavy, and he and the adjutant joined Cosgrave and me, and we four spent an anxious night there in the dark. One officer was on watch "on the bridge" (as we called the trench at the top of the ridge) with the telephones.



L.N.A.

RARE LUXURY OUT OF A CANVAS BUCKET

In the first years of the war a real bath was a rare luxury for the soldiers, even behind the lines, but one that every man valued perhaps more than any other. Ablutions were sometimes performed in strange places, and this officer is taking the nearest approach he can get to a shower-bath in a railway siding. His batman pours a stream of cold



WHAT 'LIZZIE' DID TO A TURKISH BIG GUN

In the attempt to force the Dardanelles from the sea the first task that lay before the Allied Fleet was to reduce the fort at Helles on the toe of the Peninsula where the heroic landings were afterwards made. On February 25 the Agamemnon opened fire at a range of 10,000 yards, but the 9·4 guns of the fort were soon straddling her, and she was ordered to weigh anchor. Before she could get out of range she was hit seven times, with armour-piercing shells, in ten minutes. Most of the shells broke up without bursting, but three men were killed and five seriously wounded, while her side was pierced above the waterline.



Central Press

Then came the Queen Elizabeth with her 15-in. guns. She had only recently been commissioned, and for want of gun-practice found it at first difficult to get the range. It was not until her sixteenth or seventeenth shot that she hit the Cape Helles Fort. Above is the result—one of the 9·4 guns completely wrecked amidst the débris of the fort. This photograph, taken after the British landing at Gallipoli, shows twenty British soldiers sitting in triumph on this proof of " Lizzie's " prowess. The pivoted wheels on which the gun swung round on rails can be seen amidst the shattered mounting.



WHEN THE TERROR OF GAS FIRST CAME TO THE TRENCHES

Imperial War Museum

The first use of gas by the Germans on April 22, 1915, was received with almost incredulous horror by the whole civilized world. Defensive measures were at once devised, and these took the form of masks, the first of which were issued during the early days of May. Above, men of B Company, 1st Cameronians, preparing for a gas attack in the Bois-Grenier sector on May 20, 1915. The masks consisted of a flannel pad, chemically treated, and mica goggles to protect the eyes. It was a primitive device which would have been useless against the more powerful gases used later. It was not until July 6 that the whole army was equipped with the bag type "smoke helmet."

CANADIAN COURAGE and SELF-SACRIFICE

At the Second Ypres Battle

by Lord Beaverbrook

LORD BEAVERBROOK, who as Sir Max Aitken was Canadian "Eye Witness," had unexampled opportunities for watching the deeds of gallantry of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He here describes the heroic actions during the Second Battle of Ypres, which in part or whole fell under his own observation. In the words of his friend Bonar Law, Prime Minister in 1922, his account is "a model of lucid, picturesque and sympathetic narrative." Here he also describes the effects of the first use of poison gas by the Germans on the Ypres front



Swaine

FAMOUS EYE WITNESS

From 1915 onwards Lord Beaverbrook was closely associated with the Canadian Division, as "Eye Witness" in 1915. He was Canadian Government Representative at the Front in 1916, and Officer in Charge of Canadian Records 1917.

MY story of the second battle of Ypres is the story of how the Canadian Division, enormously outnumbered—for they had in front of them at least four divisions, supported by immensely heavy artillery—with a gap still existing, though reduced, in their lines, and with dispositions made hurriedly under the stimulus of critical danger, fought through the day and through the night, and then through another day and night; fought under their officers until, as happened to so many, these perished gloriously, and then fought from the impulsion of sheer valour because they came from fighting stock.

The enemy, of course, was aware—whether fully or not may perhaps be doubted—of the advantage his breach in the line had given him, and immediately began to push a formidable series of attacks on the whole of the newly-formed Canadian salient. If it is possible to distinguish, when the attack was everywhere so fierce, it developed with particular intensity at this moment on the apex of the newly-formed line running in the direction of St. Julien.

FOUR British guns were taken in a wood comparatively early in the evening of April 22. The General Officer commanding the Canadian Division had no intention of allowing the enemy to retain possession of either the wood or the guns without a desperate struggle, and he ordered a counter-attack towards the wood to be made by the 3rd Infantry Brigade under General Turner. This Brigade was then reinforced by the 2nd Battalion under Lieut.-Colonel Watson and the 3rd (Toronto) Battalion under Lieut.-Colonel Rennie, both of the 1st Brigade. The 7th Battalion (British Columbia Regiment), from the 2nd Brigade, had by this time occupied entrenchments in support of the 3rd Brigade. The 10th Battalion of the 2nd Brigade, intercepted on its way up as a working party, was also placed in support of the 3rd Brigade.

The assault upon the wood was launched shortly after midnight of April 22–23 by the 10th Battalion and 16th (Canadian-Scottish) Battalion, respectively commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Boyle and Lieut.-Colonel R. G. E. Leckie. The advance was made under the heaviest machine-gun and rifle fire, the wood was reached, and, after a desperate struggle by the light of a misty moon, they took the position at the point of the bayonet.

An officer who took part in the attack described to me how the men about him fell under the fire of the machine-guns, which, in his phrase, played upon them "like a watering pot." He added quite simply, "I wrote my own life off." But the line never wavered.

WHEN one man fell another took his place, and, with a final shout, the survivors of the two battalions flung themselves into the wood. The German garrison was completely demoralized, and the impetuous advance of the Canadians did not cease until they reached the far side of the wood and entrenched themselves there in the position so dearly gained. They had, however, the disappointment of finding that the guns had been destroyed by the enemy, and later in the same night a most formidable concentration of artillery fire, sweeping the wood as a tropical storm sweeps the leaves from the trees of a forest, made it impossible for them to hold the position for which they had sacrificed so much.

Within a few hours of this attack, the 10th Canadian Battalion was again ordered to advance by Lieut.-Colonel Boyle, late a rancher in the neighbourhood of Calgary. The assault was made upon a German trench which was being hastily constructed within two hundred yards of the battalion's right front. Machine-gun and rifle fire opened upon the battalion at the moment the charge began, and Colonel Boyle fell almost instantly with his left thigh pierced in five places. Major MacLaren, his second in command, was also wounded at this time. Battalion stretcher-bearers dressed the colonel's wounds and carried him back to the battalion first-aid station. From there he was moved to Vlamertinghe Field Hospital, and from there again to Poperinghe. He was unconscious when he reached the hospital, and died shortly afterwards without regaining consciousness.

MAJOR MACLAREN, already wounded, was killed by a shell while on his way to the hospital. The command of the 10th Battalion passed to Major D. M. Ormond, who was wounded. Major Guthrie, a lawyer from Fredericton, New Brunswick, a member of the local Parliament and a very resolute soldier, then took command of the battalion.

The fighting continued without intermission all through the night of April 22–23, and to those who observed the indications that the attack was being pushed with ever-growing strength, it hardly seemed possible that the Canadians, fighting in positions so difficult to defend and so little the subject of deliberate choice, could maintain their resistance for any long period.



HERE MEN WITH THE MAPLE LEAF BADGE FELL

In this chapter Lord Beaverbrook describes the magnificent stand by the Canadians at St. Julien during the second battle of Ypres, a spot where the attack developed with great intensity. One particularly hot corner was the Wieltje Road, seen above twenty-three years after the day when shells, machine guns and gas brought death to over two thousand men.

Photo, William Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.

Reinforcements of British troops, commanded by Colonel Geddes, of the Buffs, began to arrive in the gap early on Friday morning. These reinforcements, consisting of three and a half battalions of the 28th Division—drawn from the Buffs, King's Own Royal Leinsters, Middlesex, and York and Lancasters—and other units which joined them from time to time, became known as Geddes' Detachment. The grenadier company of a battalion of the Northumberland Fusiliers, numbering two officers and 120 men, who were on their way to rejoin their division after eight days of trench-fighting at Hill 60, encountered Colonel Geddes' force and joined it.

Colonel Geddes was killed on the morning of April 28 in tragic circumstances. He had done magnificent work with his composite force, and after five days' terrific fighting received orders to retire. He was just leaving his dug-out, after handing over his command, when a shell ended his career.

At 6 a.m. on Friday, the 2nd Canadian Brigade was still intact, but the 3rd Canadian Brigade, on the left, was bent back upon St. Julien. It became apparent that the left was becoming more and more involved, and a powerful German attempt to outflank it developed rapidly. The consequences, if it had been broken or outflanked, need not be insisted upon. They would not have been merely local. It was therefore decided, formidable as the attempt undoubtedly was, to try to give relief by a counter-attack upon the first line of German trenches, now far, far advanced from those originally occupied by the French. The attack was carried out at 6.30 a.m. by the 1st (Ontario) Battalion and the 4th Battalion of the 1st Brigade, under Brigadier-General Mercer, acting with Geddes' Detachment. The 4th Battalion was in advance and the 1st in support, under the covering fire of the 1st Canadian Artillery Brigade.

It is safe to say that the youngest private in the ranks, as he set his teeth for the advance, knew the task in front of him, and the youngest subaltern knew all that rested on its success.

It did not seem that any human being could live in the shower of shot and shell which began to play upon the advancing troops.

They suffered terrible casualties. For a short time every other man seemed to fall, but the attack was pressed ever closer and closer. The 4th Canadian Battalion at one moment came under a particularly withering fire.

For a moment—not more—it wavered. Its most gallant commanding officer, Lieut.-Colonel Birchall, carrying, after an old fashion, a light cane, coolly and cheerfully rallied his men, and at the very moment when his example had infected them, fell dead at the head of his battalion. With a hoarse cry of anger they sprang forward (for, indeed, they loved him) as if to avenge his death.

The astonishing attack which followed, pushed home in the face of direct frontal fire, made in broad daylight by battalions whose names should live for ever in the memories of soldiers, was carried to the first line of the German trenches. After a hand-to-hand struggle, the last German who resisted was bayoneted, and the trench was won.

THE measure of our success may be taken when it is pointed out that this trench represented, in the German advance, the apex in the breach which the enemy had made in the original line of the Allies, and it was two and a half miles south of that line. This charge, made by men who looked death indifferently in the face—for no man who took part in it could think he was likely to live—saved, and that was much, the Canadian left. But it did more.

Up to the point where the assailants conquered, or died, it secured and maintained during the most critical moment of all the integrity of the Allied line. For the trench was not only taken—it was held thereafter against all comers, and in the teeth of every conceivable projectile, until the night of Sunday, April 25, when all that remained of the war-broken but victorious battalions was relieved by fresh troops . . . .

It is necessary now to return to the fortunes of the 3rd Brigade, commanded by General Turner, which . . . at five o'clock on Thursday was holding the Canadian left, and after their first attack assumed the defence of the new Canadian salient, at the same time sparing all the men it could to form an extemporised line between the wood and St. Julien.

This Brigade was also at the first moment of the German offensive made the object of an attack by a discharge of poisonous gas. The discharge was followed by two enemy assaults.

Although the fumes were extremely poisonous, they were not, perhaps, having regard to the wind, so disabling as on the French lines (which ran almost east to west), and the Brigade, though affected by the fumes, stoutly beat back the two German assaults. Encouraged by this success, it rose to the supreme effort required by the assault on the wood, which has already been described.

At 4 a.m. on the morning of Friday, the 23rd, a fresh emission of gas was made both on the 2nd Brigade, which held the line running north-east, and on the 3rd Brigade, which, as has been fully explained, had continued the line up to the pivotal point as defined above, and had there spread down in a south-easterly direction.

IT is perhaps worth mentioning that two privates of the 48th Highlanders, who found their way into the trenches . . . perished in the fumes, and it was noticed that their faces became blue immediately after dissolution. The Royal Highlanders of Montreal, 13th Battalion, and the 48th Highlanders, 15th Battalion, were more especially affected by the discharge. The Royal Highlanders, though considerably shaken, remained immovable on their ground. The 48th Highlanders, who no doubt received a more poisonous discharge, were for the moment dismayed, and, indeed, their trench, according to the testimony of very hardened soldiers, became intolerable.

The battalion retired from the trench, but for a very short distance and for a very short time. In a few moments they were again their own men. They



Imperial War Museum

THE FIRST GASSED MEN CAME TO THIS WAREHOUSE

The building seen above at Vlamertinghe was the Field Hospital to which the wounded and gassed Canadians, who had fought so heroically at St. Julien, were removed after they had received preliminary attention at the field dressing-station. From here, Major MacLaren was taken after being mortally wounded in the gallant charge described in page 359. Before war came to Vlamertinghe this building was a hop warehouse and only dire necessity caused it to be used as a hospital.



L.N.A.

THIRD-CLASS COACHES, BUT FIRST-CLASS MEN

In the first year of the war there were few of the well-equipped hospital trains which later on took the wounded on the first stage of their journey to base hospital or "Blighty." Third-class coaches, none too comfortable at any time, served for the wounded and the gassed, who could still sit up. Here are such men taking a breather and a cup of tea from a Red Cross nurse, during one of the many stops made as the train jolted towards the base.

advanced on and reoccupied the trenches which they had momentarily abandoned.

In the course of the same night the 3rd Brigade, which had already displayed a resource, a gallantry, and a tenacity for which no eulogy could be excessive, was exposed (and with it the whole Allied cause) to a peril still more formidable. Several German divisions were attempting to crush or drive back this devoted Brigade, and in any event to use their enormous numerical superiority to sweep around and overwhelm its left wing. At some point in the line which cannot be precisely determined, the last attempt partially succeeded, and, in the course of this critical struggle, German troops in considerable though not in overwhelming numbers swung past the unsupported left of the Brigade, and, slipping in between the wood and St. Julien, added to the torturing anxieties of the long-drawn struggle by the appearance, and indeed for the moment the reality, of isolation from the Brigade base.

In the exertions made by the 3rd Brigade during this supreme crisis it is almost impossible to single out one battalion without injustice to others, but though the efforts of the Royal Highlanders of Montreal, 13th Battalion, were only equal to those of the other battalions who did such heroic service, it so happened, by chance, that the fate of some of its officers attracted special attention.

Major Norsworthy was in the reserve trenches, half a mile in the rear of the firing line, when he was killed in his attempt to reach Major McCuaig with reinforcements; and Captain Guy Drummond fell in attempting to rally French troops. This was on the afternoon of the 22nd, and the whole responsibility for coping with the crisis then fell upon the shoulders of Major McCuaig until he was relieved early on the morning of the 23rd.

All through the afternoon and evening of the 22nd, and all through the night which followed, McCuaig had to meet and grapple with difficulties which might have borne down a far more experienced officer. His communications had been cut by shell fire, and he was, therefore, left to decide for himself whether he should retire or whether he should hold on. He decided to hold on, although he knew that he was without artillery support and could not hope for any until, at the earliest, the morning of the 23rd.

The decision was a very bold one. By all the rules of war McCuaig was a beaten man. But the very fact that he remained appears to have deceived the Germans. They might have overwhelmed him, but they feared the supports, which did not in reality exist. It was not in the enemy's psychology to understand that the sheer and unaided valour of McCuaig and his little force would hold the position.

But with a small and dwindling force he did hold it, until daylight revealed to the enemy the naked deception of the defence.



WHERE POISON GAS FIRST TOOK ITS TOLL

This impressive war memorial, one of the finest in France or Belgium, stands at St. Julien in the Ypres salient. It commemorates 2,000 Canadian soldiers who died in the first gas attack against which they had no protection. An inscription on it reads, "This column marks the battlefield where 18,000 Canadians on the British left withstood the first gas attack." Particularly moving is the sculpture of the head and shoulders of a Canadian soldier which surmounts the column. His head is bowed and his hands are crossed on the butt of his rifle which tapers away into the column.

Photo, William Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.

I SAW the AGONY of The FIRST GAS ATTACK

by Anthony R. Hossack

ANTHONY R. HOSSACK joined the Queen Victoria Rifles in 1914 and served on the Western Front from early 1915 until he was wounded in 1917. He was again at the front in February 1918 serving with a Machine-Gun Battalion of the 9th (Scottish) Division. His most vivid recollection of the horrors of war was his experience of the first German gas attack, here most dramatically described



RIFLEMAN AND MACHINE-GUNNER

Mr. Hossack continued to fight on the Western Front after the incidents described in this chapter until he was taken prisoner in the battle for Mount Kemmel in April 1918.

IT was Thursday evening, April 22, 1915. In a meadow off the Poperinghe-Ypres road, the men of the Queen Victoria Rifles were taking their ease. We had just fought our first big action in the fight for Hill 60. We had had a gruelling time, and had left many of our comrades on its slopes. We survivors were utterly spent and weary; but we felt in good heart, for only an hour ago we had been personally congratulated by Sir John French, also the Army Commander, General Smith-Dorrien.

Now some of us were stretched out asleep on the grass, others making preparations for a much-needed toilet. Our cooks were preparing a meal, and on our right a squad of Sappers were busily erecting huts in which we were to sleep. Alas, we never used them! As the sun was beginning to sink, this peaceful atmosphere was shattered by the noise of heavy shell-fire coming from the north-west, which increased every minute in volume, while a mile away on our right a 42-cm. shell burst in the heart of the stricken city of Ypres.

AS we gazed in the direction of the bombardment, where our line joined the French, six miles away, we could see in the failing light the flash of shrapnel, with here and there the light of a rocket. But more curious than anything was a low cloud of yellow-grey smoke or vapour, and, underlying everything, a dull confused murmuring.

Suddenly down the road from the Yser Canal came a galloping team of horses, the riders goading on their mounts in a frenzied way; then another and another, till the road became a seething mass with a huge pall of dust over all.

Plainly something terrible was happening. What was it? Officers and staff officers, too, stood gazing at the scene, awestruck and dumbfounded; for in the northerly breeze there came a pungent nauseating smell that tickled the throat and made our eyes smart.

The horses and men were still pouring down the road, two or three men on a horse, I saw, while over the fields streamed mobs of infantry, the dusky warriors of French Africa; away went their rifles, equipment, even their tunics that they might run the faster. One man came stumbling through our lines. An officer of ours held him up with levelled revolver. "What's the matter, you bloody lot of cowards?" says he. The Zouave was frothing at the mouth, his eyes started from their sockets, and he fell writhing at the officer's feet.

"Fall in!" Ah, we expected that cry! And soon we moved across the fields in the direction of the line for about a mile. The battalion is formed into line, and we dig ourselves in.

IT is quite dark now, and water is being brought round, and we hear how the Germans have, by the use of poison gas, driven a French army corps out of the line, creating a huge gap which the Canadians have closed *pro tem.* A cheer goes up at this bald statement, though little we knew at what a cost those gallant souls were holding on.

About midnight we withdrew from our temporary trenches and marched about for the rest of the night, till at dawn we were permitted to snatch what sleep we could under a hedge. About the middle of the morning we were on the move again, to the north, and were soon swinging along through Vlamertinghe. About two miles out of

ALWAYS THE FIRST SIGN OF COMING DOOM

Below is the main street of Vlamertinghe as it was soon after the events related by Private Hossack in this chapter. The work of destruction by the enemy guns has begun and, as was usually the case, the tower of the village church was the first mark of the enemy gunners because of its value as an observation post. Like all the villages in the Ypres sector, Vlamertinghe was gradually reduced to utter ruin.

Imperial War Museum





E.N.A.

THEY CAME FROM DESERT SANDS TO YPRES MUD

The troops of French North Africa fought with extraordinary loyalty and bravery for the Republic of which they were proud to boast themselves citizens. Here are some of the dusky warriors whose élan is described in this chapter. They are Algerian tirailleurs popularly known as "Turcos," men of a fighting race who quickly accustomed themselves to modern warfare under the most exacting conditions.

that town we halted in a field. By this time we had joined up with the remainder of our Brigade, the 13th, and, after a meal had been served, we were ordered to dump our packs and fall in by companies. Here our company commander, Captain Flemming, addressed us. "We are," he said, "tired and weary men who would like to rest; however, there are men more weary than we who need our help. We may not have to do much; we may have to do a great deal. Whatever happens, fight like hell. I shall at any rate." A few moments more—then off we go again towards that incessant bombardment, which seemed to come closer every minute.

The Scottish Borderers led the Brigade, followed by the Royal West Kents, then ourselves—all with bayonets fixed, for we were told to be prepared to meet the Germans anywhere on the road.

We were now in the area of the ill-fated French Colonial Corps. Ambulances were everywhere, and the village of Brielen, through which we passed, was choked with wounded and gassed men. We were very mystified about this gas, and had no protection whatever against it.

Shortly after passing through Brielen we turned to the left down a road which led to the Canal, along the south side of which ran a steep spoil bank, and as the head of our battalion reached this we halted. We could see nothing of what went on on the other side, but knew by the rattle of musketry that there was something doing. So there was, for when we finally crossed the pontoon we found that the Jocks had met the Germans on the north bank and had bundled them helter-skelter up the slope to Pilckem. This saved us any dirty work for that day, so we spent the rest of it till midnight in carrying supplies and ammunition to the Jocks and Kents, and afterwards lay in reserve on the canal bank. It froze hard that night, and after the sweating fatigue of carrying boxes of S.A.A. all night we were literally aching with cold. All night there seemed to be a spasmodic bombardment all round the Salient.

'THINGS ARE CRITICAL'

Next morning about 12 o'clock the adjutant, Captain Culme-Seymour, was chatting to Captain Flemming a few paces away from where I was lying, when up rushed a breathless dispatch rider and handed him a message, which he read aloud to Flemming. I caught three words, "Things are critical." In about five minutes the colonel had the battalion on the move. We moved off in double file by companies, our company leading; as we did so a big shell burst in the midst of "D" Company, making a fearful mess. We moved on quickly, like a gigantic serpent, with short halts now and then. As we skirted Ypres there was a roar of swift-moving thunder and an enormous shell, which seemed to be falling on top of us, burst a quarter of a mile away, covering us with dirt.

Over meadows and fields green with young crops which would never be harvested, past cows peacefully grazing that had had their last milking, we went, passing curiously unperturbed peasants, who watched us from the farms and cottages.

As we crossed the Roulers road a lone cavalryman came galloping down it, hatless and rolling in the saddle as though drunk. Some wag throws a ribald jest at him. He turns his ashy face towards us, and his saddle it seems is a mass of blood. Above us a Taube appears and, hovering over us, lets fall a cascade of glittering silver-like petals. A few moments more and shells begin to fall about us in quantities, and gaps begin to appear in our snakelike line.

We pass a field battery; it is not firing, as it has nothing to fire, and its commander sits weeping on the trail of one of his useless guns. We quicken our pace, but the shelling gets heavier. It seems to be raining shrapnel. Captain Flemming falls, but struggles to his feet and waves us on with encouraging words. We double across a field, and in a few moments come on to the road again. Here was action indeed, for barely had we reached the road and started to work our way towards St. Julien, than we found ourselves amongst a crowd of Canadians of all regiments jumbled up anyhow, and apparently fighting a desperate rearguard action. They nearly all appeared to be wounded and were firing as hard as they could.

Then comes an order: "Dig in on the roadside." We all scrambled into the ditch, which, like all Flanders ditches, was full of black, liquid mud, and started to work with entrenching tools—a hopeless job. A woman was bringing jugs of water from a cottage a few yards away; evidently she had just completed her week's washing, for a line of garments fluttered in the garden.

"Dig! Dig for your lives!" shouts an officer. But, dig? How can we? 'Tis balers we need.

A detonation like thunder, and I inhale the filthy fumes of a 5·9 as I cringe against the muddy bank. The German heavies have got the road taped to an inch. Their last shell has pitched on our two M.G. teams, sheltering in the ditch on the other side of the road. They disappear, and all we can hear are groans so terrible they will haunt me for ever. Kennison, their officer, stares dazed, looking at a mass of blood and earth. Another crash and the woman and her cottage and water jars vanish and her pitiful washing hangs in a mocking way from her sagging clothes line. A bunch of telephone wires falls about us. To my bemused brain this is a catastrophe in itself, and I curse a Canadian sapper beside me for not attempting to mend them. He eyes me vacantly, for he is dead.

More and more of these huge shells, two of them right in our midst. Shrieks of agony and groans all round me. I am splashed with blood. Surely I am hit, for my head feels as though a battering-ram has struck it. But no, I appear not to be, though all about me are bits of men and ghastly mixtures of khaki and blood.

The road becomes a perfect shambles. For perhaps half a minute a panic ensues, and we start to retire down the road. But not for long. Colonel Shipley stands in the centre of the road, blood streaming down his face. The gallant Flemming lies at his feet, and the adjutant, Culme-Seymour,



WHERE GAS AND SHELL KILLED—NATURE'S PEACE NOW REIGNS

The two photographs in this page show scenes where men suffered, endured and met agonizing death in the maelstrom of battle. On the right is the scene of the first gas attack. A Calvary, in the style of those seen in so many villages of Brittany, stands as a memorial to a Breton regiment that suffered heavily here. Below is a scene at Brielen, once one of the hottest spots in the Ypres salient. A British ex-soldier is looking at the spot where he and many of his comrades were first shelled; there corn stooks now stand.

Photos, William Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.





stands in a gateway calmly lighting a cigarette.

"Steady, my lads!" says the colonel. "Steady, the Vics! Remember the regiment." The panic is ended.

"This way," says Seymour. "Follow me through this gate here." As we dash through the gate, I catch a glimpse of our M.O. working in an empty gun-pit like a butcher in his shop. Many were the lives he saved that day.

ONCE through the gate we charge madly across a field of young corn. Shrapnel and machine-gun bullets are cracking and hissing everywhere. Ahead of us is a large farm, and advancing upon it at almost right angles to us is a dense mass of German infantry. We are carrying four extra bandoliers of ammunition as well as the rest of our equipment. Shall I ever get there? My limbs ache with fatigue and my legs are like lead. But the inspiring figure of Seymour urges us on, yet even he cannot prevent the thinning of our line or the gaps being torn in it by the German field-gunners, whom we can now plainly see.

At last we reach the farm, and we follow Culme-Seymour round to its farther side. The roar of enemy machine-guns rises to a crazy shrieking, but we are past caring about them, and with a sob of relief we fall into the farm's encircling trench. Not too soon either, for that grey mass is only a few hundred yards off, and "Rapid fire! Let 'em have it, boys!" and don't we just.

At last a target, and one that we cannot miss. The Germans fall in scores, and their batteries limber up and away. At last we have our revenge for the discomfort of the afternoon. But the enemy re-form and come on again, and we allow them to come a bit nearer, which they do.

We fire till our rifles are almost too hot to hold and the few survivors of our mad quarter of an hour stagger back. The attack has failed, and we have held them, and thank God that we have, for, as our next order tells us, "This line must be held at all costs. Our next is the English Channel."

And hold it we did, through several more big attacks, though the enemy set fire to the farm and nearly roasted us, though our numbers dwindled and we were foodless and sleepless, till, thirty-six hours later, we were relieved in a misty dawn, and crept back through burning Ypres for a few hours' respite.



FIRST WHIFFS OF DEADLY FUMES

The first use of gas by the Germans in the Ypres sector on April 22, 1915, was quickly followed by the issue of various types of respirator. Top, left, a soldier is wearing one type of cotton-wool pad with a cotton elastic band to fasten it round his head. In his hands is another type, a mouth-and-nose-piece of double stockinette with plaited worsted loops for the ears. Before poison gas made respirators essential, the acute discomfort arising from the fumes of picric acid used as an explosive in some of the early shells led to the adoption of a rudimentary form of protection. Here men of the R.F.A. in training in 1915 are digging with wet handkerchiefs and special pads over the nose and mouth.



THE BRITISH MASKS WERE BETTER

It was inevitable that the Allies should accept Germany's hideous challenge to gas warfare, but the first consignment of gas cylinders was not dispatched to France until July 10, 1915. Here are seen the early preparations against gas made by the German and British Armies. Above are men of the 27th German Infantry Regiment wearing the first respirators (without goggles) issued to them, while below are Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in the Bois Grenier sector wearing gas masks issued on May 3, 1915. They are slightly different from those illustrated in page 388



RETREATING on YPRES the DEAD

And the 'Secret Gun' in the Night

by Stanley Casson

MR. STANLEY CASSON is both one of the most distinguished living archaeologists and a writer of distinction. He served in Flanders with the 1st East Lancashire. His moving description of the difficult days which marked the ending of the second battle of Ypres is a gem of war literature



PRESENT AT YPRES

Mr. Stanley Casson was present when "Gas Mask Type 1," shown in the photograph in page 368, was issued, and with a "temporary soldier's" eye for the practical he saw its deficiences.

FROM Vlamertinghe we marched East, and soon night was on us, but night lit by a vivid and lovely moon. In a short time we were in the outskirts of Ypres, a shattered ruin of houses. We halted, formed into single file and began to cross the town. It was a strange and uncanny sight, this corpse of a city that had just died. The smooth cobbled streets and squares were pitted with enormous holes, and great pools of blood lay here and there. Dead horses from scurrying guns and limbers lay in swollen heaps, putrefying the very air itself. The moon made every line clear and stark, and every shadow a patch of sepia. Almost every moment, here or there, a violent flash of orange marked the burst of a shell. The continuous booming of the German guns, which seemed so very near, was broken only at intervals, and those intervals formed shocked silences as eerie as the moonlight.

ONCE or twice a sound like that of an electric train rushing through the air made us pause, fear-struck. An immense explosion and a blinding flash told us that here were the projectiles of the largest gun of all. In one place we threaded our way past a vast crater in the road which was one of the holes made by this famous gun. The night was hot and airless, and we dripped with sweat. Pervading everything was the reeking stench of dead horses and dead men.

Once only did we see a living thing in this murdered city, when a dark ambulance came tearing through the streets picking its way with incredible skill and never pausing for a second, almost as if the furies were pursuing it. At length we emerged from this nightmare land, crossed the old battered moat through what was once the Menin Gate, and we were out in the open country once more. Here at last we were back again in the sort of setting that we knew. But it was grimmer than anything we had seen.

Great streamers of smoke from the smouldering city covered the sky, but away East was the line that we knew, clear to us as on any map, by the long row of constant star-shells. Behind us was the crash of intermittent shells falling on Ypres, in front the crackle of infantry-fire. We paused by the roadside and formed up into column. A few hundreds yards on we had an hour's rest, and most of us slept coldly but solidly in the moonlight by the hedges. At length we moved into a battered row of half-dug trenches that formed a reserve position in the very centre of the Salient, which it was clear enough by now was the spear-head of a defence, and the main objective of attack in a prolonged battle. Here were no quiet times where we and the Germans could snipe and stand-to and sleep and patrol. This was a battle for a purpose, and the only purpose of the Germans must be to break through.

When dawn broke in our battered support trench it was evident enough that we were all in the hollow of a great bowl, with the Germans sitting on the rim and shooting at us.

WE spent three days here continuously on the alert, for we had orders to stand by to be sent in support in any direction. Our little battalion was serving the purpose of reserve for a whole Army Corps, for we were short of men and the line was thinly held. But we had a superb view of the long line of battle. In effect it was an isosceles triangle, which was being attacked along the whole length of its long sides. The short base was Ypres itself. At night we could see the flares and star-shells running almost all round us. The main road, along which all the traffic of reinforcements and supply went, bisected the base of the triangle and ended at this point. Some cynic remarked, truly enough, that if you walked from Ypres along this road you could be hit from almost every possible angle except from directly behind, so that the only invulnerable part of your body would be a long thin line down the spine. . . .

WE were on a small eminence, and away towards the village of St. Julien we could look down over our own and the German lines. Just about sunset on a calm evening I was looking in this direction when slowly the long brown line of trenches and earth began to change to a dull luminous green.

Looking intently I saw great clouds of greenish yellow vapour creeping across from the German lines, and all clearly issuing from one or two fixed points. We had heard talk of gas, and we had once or twice detected the smell of strange chemical odours, but here was a gas attack, a mile away, which I could see in action with my own eyes.

It was, in fact, one of the last attempts of the Germans to use chlorine, and, like its predecessors, which had occurred before we moved up, it failed.

Our seniors were alarmed and waited for advice, for they saw that at any moment we might be called upon to deal with a situation that neither they nor we had ever been trained to meet. Unexpectedly help came. A parcel was delivered for each company labelled, "Gas Masks Type I." Unpacked, the parcel revealed bundles of small squares of blue flannel, just large enough to cover the mouth, with a tape on each side to tie round behind the head. Whatever benign personage contrived these amiable death-traps I do not know. But



WAR'S SHADOW CAN NEVER QUITE BE LIFTED FROM YPRES

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

This photograph of Ypres shows the town as it is today basking in the summer sunlight. Reference to the photograph in pages 106–97 of the first British troops entering the town shows how completely the ancient buildings have been reconstructed, but everywhere reminders, small or great, of war can be found. In the square a fair was being held when this photograph was taken from the belfry of the Cloth Hall by special permission of the Clerk of Works to the town. Opposite is the Hospice Notre Dame (Tribunal) and just above it to the right is the Menin Gate. On the horizon may be seen a considerable section of the Salient with Zonnebeke in the centre.

anything more futile could never have been devised by the simplicity of man. On the whole we preferred to resort to the face-towels dipped in our own urine, which an earlier order had suggested would be a temporary palliative.

Nor was our confidence restored a day later by the arrival of " Gas Masks, Type II," which was to replace the first. On unpacking my particular bundle I found that the new masks consisted of large pieces of hairy Harris tweed about three feet long and one in width, again with tapes nattily fixed to the sides. With much laughter the men tried to don their new masks. But at the bottom of the parcel I found a small printed label briefly entitled " Body Belts." So without further inquiries I ordered my men to put them to whatever use seemed best to them. To a man they placed them round their long-suffering stomachs. . . .

But local genius did more. The authorities on the spot, with incredible and commendable speed, bought up hundreds of vine-growers' sprays. These we had for use in the trenches, filled with chemicals to neutralize chlorine.

At last our time for action came. On the final day in our trenches the fire along the line became intense. As we waited and watched, suddenly over the sky-line ahead of us ran two distraught figures. They flopped into our trenches exhausted, without rifles or equipment. " We are the last of the Buffs, sir," cried one. " The Germans attacked and the regiment is wiped out."

I gave them some rum and found them rifles and equipment, comforted them and told them to get ready for more fighting. A moment later a signaller came running madly down to us : " The Germans are coming over in their thousands, sir," he said, panting. " They have broken through." We all got ready, fixed our bayonets and looked martial, when a group of four more men came tumbling over. " We are the last of the Buffs, sir," they cried. This was too much for my witty Lancashiremen, and we all roared with laughter. " Come and meet some of your friends," I said, and took them along to the first pair. They began to look foolish and then they also laughed. Indeed, we all enjoyed ourselves quite a lot. And of Germans " in their thousands " there





SCENES IN THE GHASTLY STORY OF GAS

The first respirators issued soon proved ineffective against gas. Right is one of the early types of gas helmet. It was made gas-proof by tucking the lower part of the impregnated cloth of which it consisted inside the tunic. This man is carrying as a souvenir a kukri, the knife used by Gurkhas in hand-to-hand fighting. The pathetic figure below is a seriously gassed man being given oxygen at the Northern Field Ambulance at Hazebrouck in June 1915.

Photos, Press Topics and Imperial War Museum





PEACE — RUIN — RESTORATION

At the close of the events which Mr. Casson describes in this chapter, he and his men reached at last the village of Elverdinge, a haven of rest after the storm of the Ypres salient. Through the village street they marched to find refuge at last beneath the trees of the Château. Ruin came to both village and Château, but restoration was achieved by the indomitable spirit of the Belgian people. The top photograph shows the Château as it is now, rebuilt amongst the trees, while immediately above is the village street restored with the bricks of 1915.

Photos, William Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.

was no trace. Actually a small trench had been lost to the enemy and these men had managed to get away. But it was a lesson in how a stampede starts. For the line was as strong as a rock and there was no general attack. I kept the men with me, and in half an hour they were as ready as the rest to move up again when wanted. The dramatic touch amused me. I suppose the title of "Buffs" leads to clichés. The men had done too much reading of the newspapers in quiet trenches. They could hardly help coining the phrase, for in their ears it must have sounded heroic. There was something distinguished in being "the last of the Buffs," but the distinction was becoming too popular, and their sense of humour saved them at last.

BUT the battle was being pressed in earnest and the position in the Salient had become impossible, for the long triangle was being whittled down to a thinness almost impossible for habitation. It is one thing to hold the front against the enemy but another to be shot in the back from the enemy on the other side of the triangle—and that was what was happening. Our trenches in some places could be fired at from behind by German artillery south of Ypres. The Higher Command took a wise decision. We were told that day that the Salient was to be abandoned, except for a stump that was to be held around the city of Ypres. The great spearhead was to be cut off. Our part was to go up at night to the trenches and man them while their occupants withdrew. We were to stay there an hour or so and then leave ourselves, selecting a score of men and officers to stay behind and fire at intervals to disguise the fact that the trenches were abandoned. These in turn were to depart at dawn and find their way back. . . .

We formed up at dusk, and marched over broken ground into trenches that led us to a sloping hill with the vague outlines of trees near it. As we neared, silence was ordered and, unexpectedly, we found ourselves filling a trench that was already crammed with those whom we relieved.

But they were battered and broken, and, as we filled up the narrow trench that we were to occupy for barely a few hours, we could not help treading as we went on wounded and dying men. To this day I shall remember those cries of the wounded as they begged us not to leave them behind when we went. As I turned a bend I trod unintending on a figure heaped up in a shadow. He cried out in agony.

I COULD think of nothing that could conceivably be said to him, for in such a case there is nothing to say. And I had to press on, for the Germans were hardly seventy yards away, and such was the confusion of the relief that, had they turned machine-guns on the trenches, we should have been shot like rabbits.

It was a matter of life and death to us all, and the wounded had to give way to the prime consideration of the whole and the living. We did indeed attempt to get back all the wounded we could, but any hint to the Germans that we were abandoning the Salient, and a storm of artillery would have torn up the roads and caught us all in the open.

There was no moon yet, and we finally took up our fire-stations in the trench, firing actively, so as to give no hint of the coming retreat. In due course our orders came, and all but the percentage of officers and men who were to be left behind as a skeleton garrison moved out into the open ground behind the trenches and formed up into column. There was a deathly silence from the German side, and at any moment we expected attack, or at least to be swept by rifle fire and guns. But nothing happened, and, strung up to the highest

tension, we marched off towards the spinal road of the Salient that would take us back behind the new lines which, we were told, were already held and manned, ready for the German advance which would take place on the morrow.

We reached the road simultaneously with other columns and a pack of men, here and there ten abreast, units confused, companies mixed, and officers searching for their men like lost spirits, filled up the whole surface. At intervals ambulances, packed beyond their capacity, pushed doggedly through the moving column. And over all was a soft and velvety darkness.

There was, indeed, confusion, and yet it took but little trouble when at last we crossed the canal at Ypres to get ourselves sorted out. I knew my destination, and at a point about a mile from where we started I moved my small platoon across open country with the aid of a night compass. I had never done this before except in barrack squares and had never dreamed that it would ever come in handy. . . .

We had a long and rough march. For the first night, as if by some providence, the Germans neglected to shell the roads. It was the one night when their harvest would have been a rich one. At last we came to the canal and the outskirts of battered Ypres. We passed through the new lines and heard the cheerful shouts of those who were manning it, and were waiting for the dawn when they would be able to pick off Germans as they advanced to the new position. We shouted back, bandied a joke or two and went on. Belgians near the canal waved to us, and at last we reached the village of Elverdinghe. Dawn was now well up and, as the sun rose, we filed into the delightful garden of an old castle, with an ornamental lake. But it was raining hard and we found shelter under trees and hedges.

Food appeared in due course, but the Germans were shelling every thicket and every copse, and it was not long before we were moved off to shelter farther back in a wood. There we had a magnificent rest, sprawling in the sun, washing in streams and resting to our hearts' content. Fragments of the armies of our allies appeared among the trees—Moroccans with high turbans, French cuirassiers with brass helmets like London firemen, and coloured Zouaves, The men foregathered with all alike, talking unaffectedly in the lingua franca of the Low Countries that all Englishmen have always talked when fighting in Flanders.

That night I slept the solid sleep of the healthily exhausted . . . . At breakfast I heard some of the men of the transport column telling a strange tale of a secret gun in the woods near by, said to be kept underground, and fired at night by Germans disguised as Belgian peasants. I never found out the origin of the story, but it was firmly believed. It was asserted that the gun was used to fire upon our own guns from behind, and that the Germans had been deliberately left behind there for that purpose after the original German withdrawal of some months before.

That night we did in fact hear every now and then the whistle of a shell from a gun near the suspect wood, and it sounded unlike the whistle of our own shells. This was good enough evidence for the men, and they all agreed that there was the secret gun in action. I have often wondered about the origin of that story.



SAVED FROM THE SEA

After the amazing adventures described in this chapter, Viscountess Rhondda, who on her father's death succeeded to the title, did valuable war service as Commissioner of Women's National Service in Wales and Chief Controller of Women's Recruiting

★71 May 7, 1915

I WENT DOWN With the LUSITANIA

by Viscountess Rhondda

Of all the German barbarities, the iniquitous sinking of the Lusitania by a German submarine is probably the one which will remain the most indelibly engraved on human memory. In that criminal disaster 1,198 men, women and children met their death by drowning. No account could conjure up for us more vividly the nightmare experience of the passengers on that ill-fated ship than does this thrilling narrative by Viscountess Rhondda, who was among the fortunate survivors

On Saturday, May 1 (the day on which the Lusitania was to sail), in order that there might be no mistake as to German intentions, the German Embassy at Washington issued a warning to passengers couched in general terms, which was printed in the New York morning papers directly under the notice of the sailing of the Lusitania. The first-class passengers, who were not due on board till about ten o'clock, had still time after reading the warning, unmistakable in form and position [see illustration in next page], to cancel their passage if they chose.

For the third-class passengers it came too late. As a matter of fact, I believe that no British and scarcely any American passengers acted on the warning, but we were most of us very fully conscious of the risk we were running. A number of people wrote farewell letters to their home folk and posted them in New York to follow on another vessel.

We were due to arrive in Liverpool on Saturday, May 8, and we had all imagined that the attempts would be made in the Irish Sea during our last night. We were wrong. On the Friday afternoon, at about two o'clock, we were off the south-west coast of Ireland, the Old Head of Kinsale was visible in the distance; my father and I had just come out of the dining-room after lunching and were strolling into the lift on "D" deck. "I think we might stay up on deck tonight to see if we get our thrill," he said. I had no time to answer.

There was a dull, thud-like, not very loud but unmistakable explosion.

It seemed to come from a little below us and about the middle of the vessel on the port side, that was the side towards the land. I turned and came out of the lift; somehow, the stairs seemed safer. My father walked over to look out of a porthole. I did not

wait. I had days before made up my mind that if anything happened one's instinct would be to make straight for the boat-deck (it is a horrible feeling to stay under cover even for a few moments in a boat that may be sinking), but that one must control that and go straight to one's cabin to fetch one's life-belt and then on to the boat-deck. As I ran up the stairs, the boat was already heeling over. As I ran, I thought, "I wonder I'm not more frightened," and then, "I'm beginning to get frightened, but I mustn't let myself."

I COLLECTED my life-belt, the "Boddy" belt provided by the Cunard Company. On my way back I ran into my father's cabin and took out one of his belts, fearing that he might be occupied with his papers and forget to fetch one for himself. Then I went up on to "A" deck (the boat-deck). Here there was, of course, a choice of sides. I chose the starboard side, feeling that it would somehow be safer to be as far away from the submarine as possible. The side farther from the submarine was also the higher out of the water, as the boat had listed over towards the side on which she had been hit and the deck was now slanting at a considerable angle; and to be as high as possible out of the water felt safer, too.

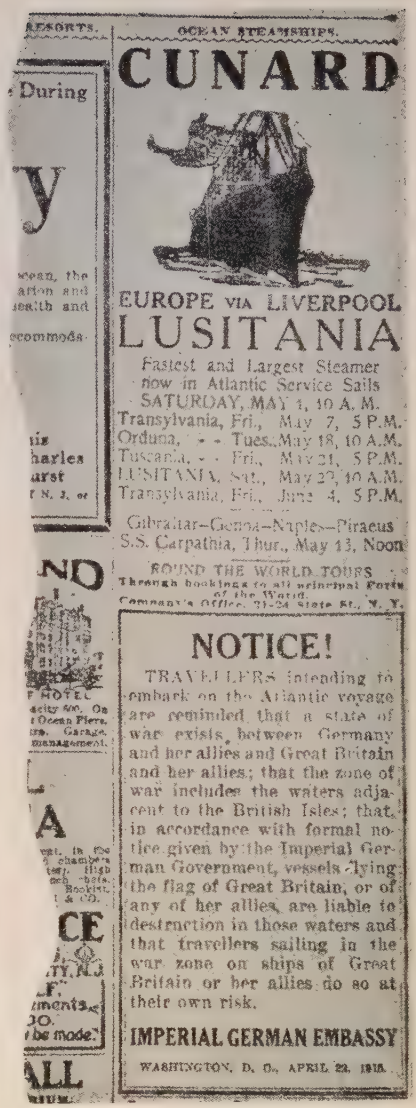
As I came out into the sunlight, I saw standing together the American doctor, Dr. F——, and his sister-in-law, Miss C——. I asked if I might stay beside them until I caught sight of my father, which I made sure of doing soon. I put on my own life-belt and held the other in my hand.

Just after I reached the deck a stream of steerage passengers came rushing up from below and fought their way into the boat nearest to us, which was being lowered. They were white-faced and terrified; I think they were shrieking. There was no kind of order—the strongest got there first, the weak were pushed aside.

HERE and there a man had his arm round a woman's waist and bore her along with him; but there were no children to be seen; no children could have lived in that throng. They rushed a boat before it was ready for them. A ship's officer made some feeble attempt to prevent them, but there was no real attempt at order or discipline. As we watched, I turned to the American girl. "I always thought a shipwreck was a well-organized affair." "So did I," said she, "but I've learnt a devil of a lot in the last five minutes."

TWO seamen began to lower the boat, which was full to overflowing, but no one was in command of them. One man lowered his end quickly, the other lowered his end slowly; the boat was in an almost perpendicular position when it reached the water. Half the people fell out, but the boat did not capsize, and I think most of them scrambled back afterwards. I do not know. We turned away and did not look. It was not safe to look at horrible things just then. Curious that it never for a moment struck any of us as possible to attempt to get into the boat ourselves. Even at that moment death would have seemed better than to make part of that terror-infected crowd. I remember regretfully thinking something of this sort.





OCEAN STEAMSHIPS.

CUNARD

EUROPE VIA LIVERPOOL

LUSITANIA

Fastest and Largest Steamer now in Atlantic Service Sails SATURDAY, MAY 1, 10 A.M.

Transylvania, Fri., May 7, 5 P.M.
Orduna, - - Tues., May 18, 10 A.M.
Tuscania, - - Fri., May 21, 5 P.M.
LUSITANIA, Sat., May 22, 10 A.M.
Transylvania, Fri., June 4, 5 P.M.

Gibraltar—Genoa—Naples—Piraeus
S.S. Carpathia, Thur., May 13, Noon

AROUND THE WORLD TOURS

NOTICE!

TRAVELLERS intending to embark on the Atlantic voyage are reminded that a state of war exists between Germany and her allies and Great Britain and her allies; that the zone of war includes the waters adjacent to the British Isles; that, in accordance with formal notice given by the Imperial German Government, vessels flying the flag of Great Britain, or of any of her allies, are liable to destruction in those waters and that travellers sailing in the war zone on ships of Great Britain or her allies do so at their own risk.

IMPERIAL GERMAN EMBASSY

WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 22, 1915.

THE PIRATES SAID 'YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED'

Above, right, is the historic notice inserted with obvious intent in American newspapers beneath the Cunard Company's advertisement of the sailing of the Lusitania on her last tragic voyage. On the slender plea that all passengers had been warned by this notice and should not have sailed, Germany based her excuses for the greatest crime of the sea. The larger photograph is of the liner's boat deck on which the moving scenes described by Viscountess Rhondda in this chapter took place.



THREE MEN WHO FOUGHT FIFTY—AND LIVED!

These three Highlanders were the heroes of an extraordinary incident which went to show that resolute men could often face fearful odds and win a victory by a gallant resistance. Escorting a British convoy near La Bassée in April 1915, they were attacked by a German patrol fifty strong. During a short but sharp fight these three Highland heroes beat off the patrol and sent it away in headlong flight, leaving seventeen men dead behind them.



FROM THE WESTERN WORLD TO THE WESTERN FRONT

The first Canadian Contingent of 33,000 men arrived in England in the autumn of 1914, and the first regiment went to Flanders in December of that year. In the early months of 1915 the remainder of the Contingent went overseas. Here men of a Canadian regiment on the march have bivouacked for their midday meal near a village in the war zone. Canadian battalions bore on their caps the famous maple leaf badge, their units being indicated only by the shoulder badges. In Chapter 68, Lord Beaverbrook describes how magnificently they acquitted themselves.



A GALLIPOLI LUXURY—FRESH WATER WASH

Too often in the Gallipoli drama the British soldier found his lot made harder by the lack of water supply which would have cleansed and soothed him after days and weeks beneath the burning sun. True, the bathing parades from the beaches that became famous were welcome, but these were necessarily infrequent for some units, and in several cases shell-fire was a constant hazard. Fortunate indeed, then, was the fellow who is shown here taking a much-needed bath safely under cover in one of the few streams that flowed through the Peninsula.

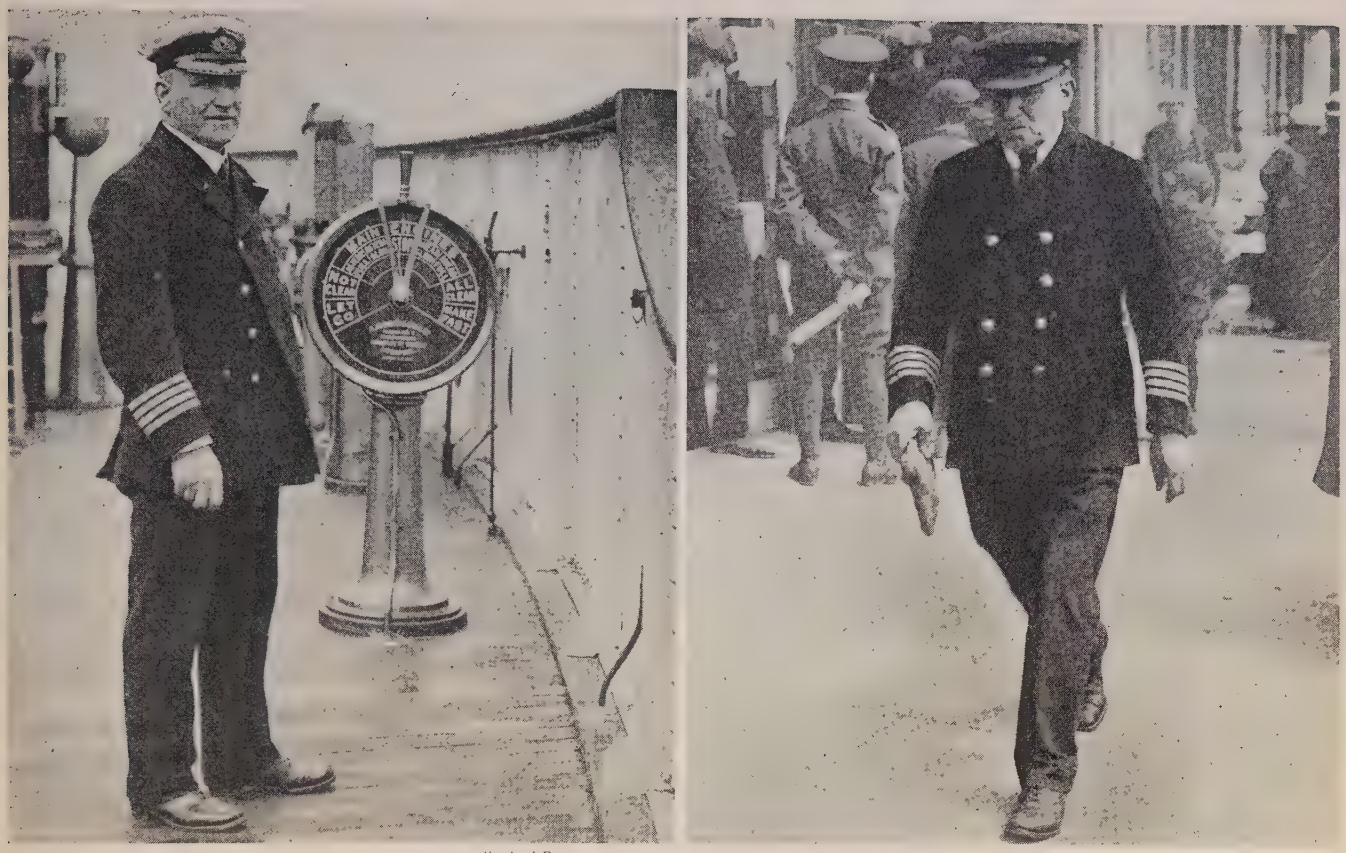
Imperial War Museum



ONE RESTFUL MOMENT IN A GALLIPOLI TRENCH

The month of May 1915 was marked by fierce day and night actions at Gallipoli and, in spite of tremendous difficulties, the spirit and grim determination of the men remained unbroken. This photograph, taken during a brief lull in the fighting, gives a clear impression of the conditions prevailing in a crude front line trench on the Peninsula. Behind the officer in the foreground, a gunner stands on the fire step, with S.A.A. boxes at hand, ready to snatch away the ground-sheet cover of his Vickers gun and open fire.

Imperial War Museum



Central Press

CAPTAIN IN TRAGIC HOURS

The Lusitania at the time she was sunk was commanded by Captain W. T. Turner, seen left on the bridge where he stood when there was a cry of "Submarine!" Captain Turner rushed to the side, but it was too late to avoid the torpedoes. The ship was struck twice, and the captain could but do his best to save his passengers and crew. True to the great traditions of his service, he went down with his ship. He was picked up after being in the sea for three hours, and right he is seen walking in Queenstown after his rescue, noticeably aged by the terrible experience.

That was the last boat I saw lowered. It became impossible to lower any more from our side owing to the list on the ship. No one else except that white-faced stream seemed to lose control. A number of people were moving about the deck, gently and vaguely. They reminded one of a swarm of bees who do not know where the queen has gone. Presently Dr. F—— decided to go down and fetch life-belts for himself and his sister-in-law. Whilst he was away the vessel righted herself perceptibly, and word was passed round that the bulkheads had been closed and the danger was over. We laughed and shook hands, and I said, "Well, you've had your thrill all right." "I never want another," she answered. Soon after, the doctor returned bearing two life-belts. He had had to wade through deep water down below to get them.

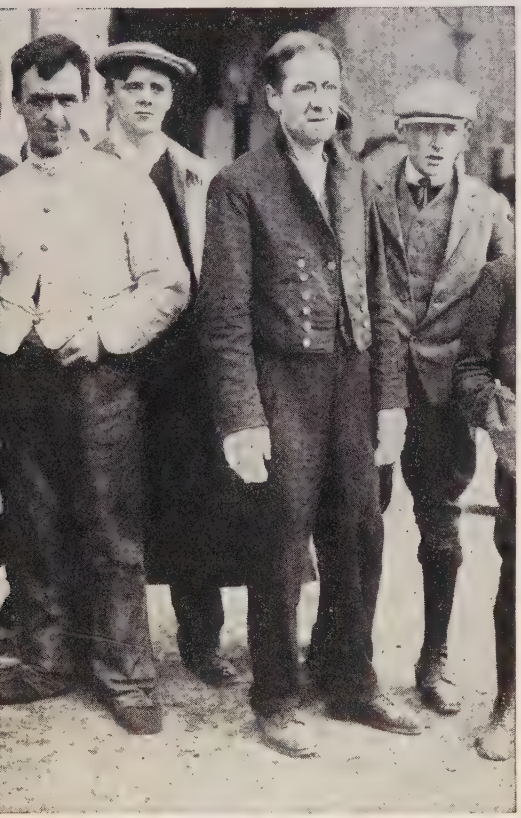
WHILST we were standing, I unhooked my skirt so that it should come straight off and not impede me in the water. The list on the ship soon got worse again, and, indeed, became very bad. Presently Dr. F—— said he thought we had better jump into the sea. (We had thought of doing so before, but word had been passed round from the captain that it was better to stay where we were.) Dr. F—— and Miss C—— moved towards the edge of the deck where the boat had been and there was no railing. I followed them, feeling frightened at the idea of jumping so far (it was, I believe, some sixty feet normally from "A" deck to the sea), and telling myself how ridiculous I was to have physical fear of the jump when we stood in such grave danger as we did. Others must have had the same fear, for a little crowd stood hesitating on the brink and kept me back.

And then, suddenly, I saw that the water had come over on to the deck. We were not, as I had thought, sixty feet above the sea—we were already under the sea. I saw the water green just about up to my knees. I do not remember its coming up farther ; that must all have happened in a second. The ship sank and I was sucked right down with her.

THE next thing I can remember was being deep down under the water. It was very dark, nearly black. I fought to come up. I was terrified of being caught on some part of the ship and kept down. That was the worst moment of terror, the only moment of acute terror, that I knew. My wrist did catch on a rope. I was scarcely aware of it at the time, but I have the mark on me to this day. At first I swallowed a lot of water ; then I remembered that I had read that one should not swallow water, so I shut my mouth. Something bothered me in my right hand and prevented me striking out with it ; I discovered that it was the life-belt I had been holding for my father. As I reached the surface I grasped a little bit of board, quite thin, a few inches wide and perhaps two or three feet long. I thought this was keeping me afloat. I was wrong. My most excellent life-belt was doing that. But everything that happened after I had been submerged was a little misty and vague ; I was slightly stupefied from then on.

When I came to the surface I found that I formed part of a large, round, floating island composed of people and debris of all sorts, lying so close together that at first there was not very much water noticeable in between. People, boats, hen-coops, chairs, rafts, boards and goodness knows what besides, all floating cheek by jowl. A man with a

white face and yellow moustache came and held on to the other end of my board. I did not quite like it, for I felt it was not large enough for two, but I did not feel justified in objecting. Every now and again he would try to move round towards my end of the board. This frightened me; I scarcely knew why at the time (I was probably quite right to be frightened; it is likely enough that he wanted to hold on to me). I summoned up my strength—to speak was an effort—and told him to go back to his own end, so that we might keep the board properly balanced. He said nothing and just meekly went back. After a while I noticed that he had disappeared. I don't know what had happened to him. He may have gone off to a hen-coop which was floating near by. I don't know whether he had a life-belt on or not. Somehow I think not.



MANY people were praying aloud in a curious, unemotional monotone; others were shouting for help in much the same slow, impersonal chant: "Bo-at—bo-at—bo-at——" I shouted for a minute or two, but it was obvious that there was no chance of any boat responding, so I soon desisted. One or two boats were visible, but they were a long way from where I was, and clearly had all they could do to pick up the people close beside them. So far as I could see, they did not appear to be moving much. By and by my legs got bitterly cold, and I decided to try to swim to a boat so as to get them out of the cold water, but it was a big effort swimming (I could normally swim a hundred yards or so, but I am not an expert swimmer). I swam only a few strokes and almost immediately gave up the attempt, because I did not see how I could get along without letting go of my piece of board, which nothing would have induced me to abandon.

There was no acute feeling of fear whilst one was floating in the water. I can remember feeling thankful that I had not been drowned underneath, but had reached the surface safely, and thinking that even if the worst happened there could be nothing unbearable to go through now that my head was above the water. The life-belt held one up in a comfortable sitting position, with one's head lying rather back, as if one were in a hammock. One was a little dazed and rather stupid and vague.

I doubt whether any of the people in the water were acutely frightened or in any consciously unbearable agony of mind. When Death is as close as he was, then the sharp agony of fear is not there; the thing is too overwhelming and stunning for that. One has the sense of something taking care of one. I don't mean in the sense of protecting one from death—rather of death itself being a benignant power.

At moments I wondered whether the whole thing was perhaps a nightmare from which I should wake, and once—half-laughing, I think—I wondered, looking round on the sun and pale blue sky and calm sea, whether I had reached heaven without knowing it—and devoutly hoped I hadn't.

ONE was acutely uncomfortable, no more than that. A discomfort mainly due to the intense cold, but further—at least so far as I was concerned—to the fact that, being a very bad sailor, when presently a little swell got up, I was sea-sick. I remember, as I sat in the water, I thought out an improvement which I considered should be adopted for all life-belts. There should be, I thought, a little bottle of chloroform strapped into each belt, so that one could inhale it and lose consciousness when one wished to. I must have been exceedingly uncomfortable before I thought of that.

The swell of the sea had the effect of causing the close-packed island of wreckage and people to drift apart. Presently I was a hundred yards or more away from anyone else. I looked up at the sun, which was high in the sky, and wished that I might lose consciousness. I don't know how long after that I did lose it, but that is the last thing I remember in the water.

The next thing I remember is lying naked between blankets on a deck in the dark. (I was, I discovered later, on a tiny patrol steamer named the Bluebell.) Every now and again a



Topical Press and L.N.A.

THEY SURVIVED TO TELL THEIR DREADFUL STORY

The upper photograph shows two of the Lusitania's crew immediately after their rescue. In the lower one are six survivors who attended the inquiry to give evidence. They are, left to right, C. Gunn, F. Hennessey, E. J. Highway, W. Egan, N. Clyde and G. Quinn. The Lusitania was carrying 1,255 passengers and a crew of 651. Only about 718 lives were saved, despite the heroic efforts of the crew and the rescue ships.



THEY DIED TOGETHER AND WERE LAID IN A COMMON GRAVE

This photograph shows the scene at the burial of some of the bodies of the victims of the Lusitania tragedy that were recovered from the sea. Those that could not be identified were interred in a common grave in Queenstown cemetery. The photograph shows a part of the huge grave with the coffins numbered instead of bearing name plates. The funeral was attended by most of the naval and military officers stationed at the port.

Topical Press

sailor came and looked at me and said, "That's better." I had a vague idea that something had happened, but I thought that I was still on the deck of the Lusitania, and I was vaguely annoyed that some unknown sailor should be attending to me instead of my own stewardess. Gradually memory came back.

The kindly sailor offered me a cup of lukewarm tea, which I drank (we were on a teetotal vessel). There did not seem much wrong with me except that my whole body was shaking violently and my teeth were chattering like castanets, as I had never supposed teeth could chatter, and that I had a violent pain in the small of my back, which I suppose was rheumatism. "We left you up here to begin with," he explained, "as we thought you were dead, and it did not seem worth while cumbering up the cabin with you."

There was some discussion as to how to get me down the cabin stairs. "It took three men to lift you on board," someone explained. I said that I thought I could walk; so, supported on either arm and with a third man holding back my dripping hair, I managed to get down. I was put into the captain's bunk, whence someone rather further recovered was ejected to make room for me. The warmth below was delicious; it seemed to make one almost delirious.

THE JOY OF BEING ALIVE

I SHOULD say that almost all of us down there (I do not know how many rescued were on board; I can remember noticing five or six, but probably there were thirty or forty) were a little drunk with the heat and the light and the joy of knowing ourselves to be alive. We were talking at the tops of our voices and laughing a great deal. At one time I was talking and laughing with some woman when a sailor came in and asked us if we had lost anyone in the wreck. I did not then know what had happened to my father; she was almost sure that her husband was drowned. He was, she had already told me (there are no veils just after a shipwreck), all she had in the world. It seemed that his loss probably meant the breaking-up of her whole life, yet at that moment she was full of cheerfulness and laughter.

I can remember two exceptions to the general merriment. The captain of the Lusitania was amongst those rescued on our little boat, but I never heard him speak. The other exception was a woman who sat silent in the outer cabin. Presently she began to speak. Quietly, gently, in a low, rather monotonous



L.N.A.

GERMAN LIES EXPOSED

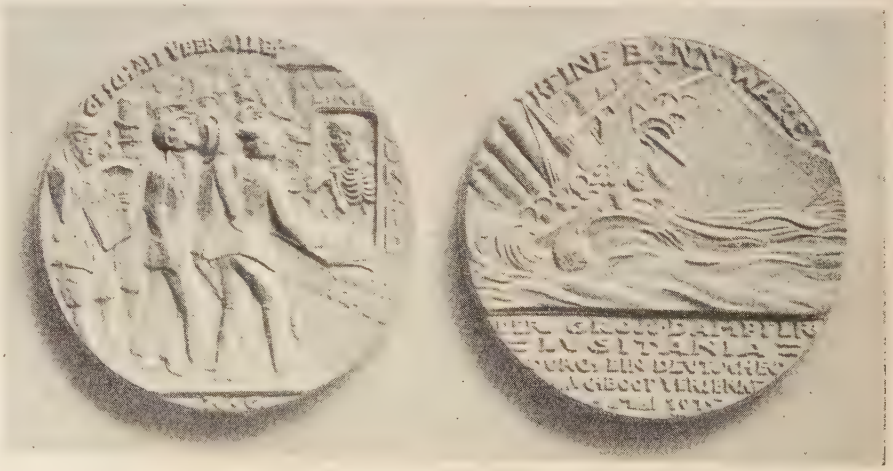
After the sinking of the Lusitania a Board of Trade inquiry into the disaster was ordered and was held at Westminster under the Presidency of Viscount Mersey, a former Judge of the Court of Admiralty. Above is the scene while the Court was sitting. The finding of the Court was that the German allegations that the ship had masked guns and was carrying munitions and Canadian soldiers were " baseless inventions and they serve only to condemn those who make use of them." Captain Turner was absolved from all blame.

voice, she described how she had lost her child. She had, so far as I can recollect, been made to place him on a raft, which, owing to some mismanagement, had capsized. She considered that his death had been unnecessary; that it had been due to the lack of organization and discipline on board, and gently, dispassionately, she said so to the captain of the Lusitania. She further stated her intention of saying so publicly later. It seemed to me, fresh from the incompetent muddle on the Lusitania's deck, that she entirely proved her case. A sailor who came in to attend to me suggested that she was hysterical. She appeared to me to be the one person on board who was not.

WE got into Queenstown harbour about eleven. A man (the steward who had waited at our table on the Lusitania) came on board and told me that my father had been rescued and was already on shore. When we came alongside, the captain of the Bluebell came in and asked if I could go ashore, as he wanted to move on again. I said certainly, but not wrapped in one tiny blanket. Modesty, which had been completely absent for some hours, was beginning faintly to return. I said I could do it if only I had a couple of safety-pins to fasten the thing together; but it was a man's ship, and the idea of safety-pins produced hoots of laughter.

Finally someone went ashore and borrowed a " British Warm " from one of the soldiers on the quay. Clad in this, with the blanket tucked round my waist underneath it, and wearing the captain's carpet slippers, I started for the shore. The gangway was a difficult obstacle. It was so placed that it meant stepping up eighteen inches or possibly a couple of feet. I must have been pretty weak, for I had to get down on to my hands and knees and crawl on to it.

At the other end of the gangway my father was waiting.



GLORYING IN THEIR SHAME

Germany showed astonishing effrontery in face of the world-wide condemnation of the sinking of the Lusitania and even issued a medal commemorating the shameful act. The reverse, left, shows Death issuing tickets at the Cunard office with the words " Business above everything." Obverse, the sinking ship with the words " No Contraband " above it, and below " The liner Lusitania sunk by a German submarine 5 May, 1915." As she was not sunk until May 7, the medal was apparently struck in anticipation.

THE GREAT GRETNA TROOP TRAIN DISASTER—

ILL-FATED ROYAL SCOTS

ON May 22, 1915, a troop train collided near Gretna with a local train. Directly afterwards an express crashed into the wreckage. David Wallace, driver of the local train, leapt from the footplate a second or two before the impact. "With a deafening roar," he says, "the engines met. The tender of the troop train closed like a concertina. Before my eyes the driver and fireman were forced into the furnace of their own engine. . . Splintered bodywork and glass flew everywhere. Men went hurtling through the air" The number of lives lost was 157 and about 200 were injured, mostly men of the 7th Royal Scots.





To the horror of the collisions was added that of fire; the wooden coaches of the troop train burned furiously, and when the firemen arrived they were handicapped by lack of water. The photograph, above, of a burnt-out coach tells its own terrible story. The troop train suffered the most damage and the casualties were heaviest amongst the soldiers, the 7th Royal Scots. Left, the injured are seen lying on mattresses in a field by the railway line. Below, the calling of the roll after the disaster. Fifty-two men of the Royal Scots answered the roll-call out of 500, though not all the remainder were casualties, since many had accompanied their injured comrades to hospital.

Topical Press





EARLY HONOURS FOR THE R.N.D. AT GALLIPOLI

The failure to take Krithia on April 28 led to the second battle of Krithia. The attack on the Turkish position was planned to begin on May 6, and on that day the Hood Battalion of the Royal Naval Division won an early success by capturing the position known as "White House," seen in this photograph. The man in the centre, with his hand to his mouth, is Lieutenant Ferguson, who was killed in action a month later. The battle resulted in an advance of the Allied line of between 400 and 600 yards.

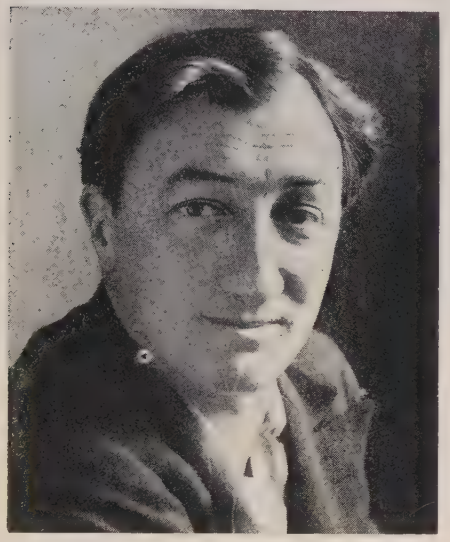
Imperial War Museum

SECTION XI

Gallipoli: Summer Interlude

May — July, 1915

DURING the summer of 1915 the Gallipoli campaign continued and deteriorated into a trench warfare of the most abominable description. ¶ To illustrate this period of stalemate when the greatest hardships of the fighting troops were suffered, we introduce a series of narratives including those of Private Wilson, who was a mere boy at the time, and "Digger" Craven, an Australian infantryman. ¶ General Monash, the inspired leader of the Anzacs, is represented by letters written in his dug-out. ¶ The Hon Aubrey Herbert who, in Chapter 30, described his adventures with the original Expeditionary Force in France, and Mr. A. P. Herbert, the well-known Member of Parliament and humorous writer, both enlarge upon the horrors of warfare in Gallipoli.



FIGHTER AND HUMORIST

After his service with the Hawke Battalion of the R.N.D. in Gallipoli, Mr A.P. Herbert, famous playwright, poet, essayist and novelist, fought on the Western Front, where he was wounded. He was called to the Bar in 1918, but has never practised.

★ 72 May—June, 1915

GALLIPOLI: SNIPERS' PARADISE and SOLDIERS' HELL

by A. P. Herbert

THE last weeks of May had something of the quality of an old English summer, and the seven plagues of the Peninsula had not yet attained the intolerable violence of June and July. True, the inhabited portion of the narrow land we won had already become in great part a wilderness; the myrtle, and rock-rose, and tangled cistus, and all that wealth of spring flowers in which the landing parties had fallen and died in April, had long been trodden to death, and there were wide stretches of yellow desert where not even the parched scrub survived.

But in the two and a half miles of bare country which lay between the capes and the foot-hills of Achi Baba was one considerable oasis of olives and stunted oaks, and therein, on the slopes of the bridge, was our camp fortunately set. The word "camp" contains an unmerited compliment to the place. The manner of its birth was characteristic of military arrangements in those days. When we were told, on that first mysterious midnight, to dig ourselves a shelter against the morning's "searching," we were far from imagining that what we dug would be our peninsular "home" and haven of rest from the firing-line for many months to come.

And so we made what we conceived to be the quickest and simplest form of shelter against a quite temporary emergency—long, straight, untraversed ditches, running parallel to and with but a few yards between each other. No worse form of permanent dwelling-place could conceivably have been constructed, for the men were cramped in these places with a minimum of comfort and a maximum of danger. No man could climb out of his narrow drain without casting a shower of dust from the crumbling parapet on to his sleeping neighbour in the next ditch; and three large German shells could have destroyed half the regiment.

Yet there were many such camps, most of them lacking the grateful concealment of our trees. Such targets even the Turkish artillery must sometimes

SHAVING WITHIN RANGE OF SHELL FIRE

Amidst the devastation that turned the greater part of the Gallipoli Peninsula into a desert, there was, as Mr A. P. Herbert relates in this page, one oasis of olives and oaks where his camp was pitched. There was, however, no "behind the lines" in Gallipoli in the sense that troops could get completely out of range of enemy guns. Even in such a rest camp as this in the oasis there was no real freedom from shell fire, and these men, enjoying the luxury of a shave, may find it at any moment interrupted by high explosives.

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PARCHED THROATS—

Amid the dry, dusty ground and scrub of the Gallipoli wilderness the British fighting men too often found scant comfort and natural cover. Always there was the call and search for drinking water, which the distinguished author of this chapter describes as being " as

hit. There were no dug-outs in the accepted sense of the Western Front; no deep, elaborate, staircased chambers, hollowed out by miners with miners' material. *Our* dug-outs *were* dug-outs in truth, shallow excavations scooped in the surface of the earth.

The only roof for a man against sun and shells was a waterproof sheet stretched precariously over his hole. It is sufficient testimony to the indifference of the Turkish artillery that with such naked concentrations of men scattered about the Peninsula, casualties in the rest-camps were so few.

EACH officer had his own private hole, set democratically among the men's; and an officer's mess was simply made by digging a larger hole and roofing it with two waterproof sheets instead of one. There was no luxury among the infantry there, and the gulf which yawns between the lives of officer and man in France as regards material comfort was barely discernible in Gallipoli. Food was dull and monotonous; for weeks we had only bully-beef and biscuits, and a little coarse bacon and tea, but it was the same for all, one honourable equality of discomfort.

At first there were no canteen facilities, and when some newcomer came from one of the islands with a bottle of champagne and another of chartreuse, we drank it with " bully " and cast-iron biscuit. Drinking water was as precious as the elixir of life, and almost as unobtainable, but officer and man had the same ration to eke out through the thirsty day.

Wells were sunk, and sometimes immediately condemned, and when we knew the water was clear and sweet to taste, it was hard to have it corrupted with the metallic flavour of chemicals by the medical staff.

Then indeed did a man learn to love water; then did he learn discipline, when he filled his water-bottle in the morning with the exiguous ration of the day, and fought with the intolerable craving to put it to his lips and there and then gurgle down his fill.

In the spring nights it was very cold, and men shivered in their single blanket under the unimaginable stars; but very early the sun came up, and by five o'clock all the camp were singing; and there were three hours of fresh coolness when it was very good to wash in a canvas bucket, and smoke in the sun before the torrid time came on; and again at seven, when the sun sat perched on the great rock of Samothrace, and Imbros was set in a fleecy marvel of pink and saffron clouds, there were two hours of pure physical content; but these, I think, were more nearly perfect than the morning because they succeeded the irritable fevers of the day.

Then the crickets in the branches sang less tediously, and the flies melted away, and all over the Peninsula the wood fires began to twinkle in the dusk, as the men cooked over a few sticks the little delicacies which were preserved



–AND PARCHED EARTH

precious as the elixir of life." In this photograph men of the Royal Naval Division are seen near the shores of Suvla waiting to receive their sparse ration of water that was to last them through the sun-scorched day.
Imperial War Museum

for this hour of respite. When we had done we sat under our olive-tree in the clear twilight, and watched the last aeroplane sail home to Rabbit Islands, and talked and argued till the glow-worms glimmering in the scrub, and up the hill the long roll of the Turks' rapid fire, told us that darkness was at hand, and the chill dew sent us into our crannies to sleep.

In France, apart from full-dress attacks, an infantryman may live for many months without once firing his rifle, or running the remotest risk of death by a rifle bullet. Patiently he tramps, and watches, and digs, and is shelled, clinging fondly to his rifle night and day, but seldom or never in a position to use it; so that in the stagnant days of the past he came to look upon it as a mere part of his equipment, like his water-bottle, only heavier and less comforting; and in real emergencies fumbled stupidly with the unfamiliar mechanism. This was true for a long time of the normal, or "peace-time," sectors of France.

But in these hill-trenches of Gallipoli the Turk and the Gentile fought with each other all day with rifle and bomb, and in the evening crept out and stabbed each other in the dark. There was no release from the strain of watching and listening and taking thought. The Turk was always on higher ground; he knew every inch of all those valleys and vineyards and scrub-strewn slopes; and he had an uncanny accuracy of aim.

Moreover, many of his men had the devotion of fanatics, which inspired them to lie out behind our lines, with stores of food enough to last out their ammunition, certain only of their own ultimate destruction, but content to lie there and pick off the infidels till they too died. They were very brave men.

But the Turkish snipers were not confined to the madmen who were caught disguised as trees in the broad daylight and found their way into the picture papers. Every trench was full of snipers, less theatrical, but no less effective. And in the night they crept out with unbelievable stealth and lay close in to our lines, killing our sentries, and chipping away our crumbling parapets.

So the sniping was terrible. In that first week we lost twelve men each day; they fell without a sound in the early morning as they stood up from their cooking at the brazier, fell shot through the head, and lay snoring horribly in the dust; they were sniped as they came up the communication trench with water, or carelessly raised their heads to look back at the ships in the bay; and in the night there were sudden screams where a sentry had moved his head too often against the moon. If a periscope were raised, however furtively, it was shivered in an instant; if a man peered over himself, he was dead.

Far back in the reserve lines or at the wells, where a man thought himself hidden from view, the sniper saw and



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HE KILLED MANY TURKS

In this page Mr. A. P. Herbert relates how a few good shots from Clydeside and Tyneside became expert snipers, and with periscopes, telescopes and a selected rifle killed many Turks. Above is such a sniper observing the Turkish trenches through his periscope to find a likely target.

killed him. All along the line were danger-posts where many had been hit; these places became invested with a peculiar awe, and as you came to them the men said, "Keep low here, sir," in a mysterious whisper, as though the Turk could hear them. Indeed, so uncanny were many of the deaths, that some men said the Turk could see impossibly through the walls of the trench, and crouched nervously in the bottom.

All the long communication trenches were watched, and wherever a head or a moving rifle showed at a gap, a bullet came with automatic regularity. Going down a communication trench alone a man would hear the tap of these bullets on the parapet following him along, and break into a half-hysterical run in the bright sunlight to get away from this unnatural pursuit; for such it seemed to him to be.

The fire seemed to come from all angles; and units bitterly accused their neighbours of killing their men when it seemed impossible that any Turk could have fired the shot. For a little, then, this sniping was thoroughly on the men's nerves. Nothing in their training had prepared them for it. They hated the "blinded" feeling it produced; it was demoralizing always to be wondering if one's head was low enough, always to walk with a stoop; it was tiring to be always taking care; and it was very dangerous to relax that care for a moment. Something had to be done; and the heavy, methodical way in which these Tynesiders of ours learned to counter and finally overcome the sniper, is characteristic of the nation's effort throughout this war.

The Turks were natural soldiers, fighting in their own country; more, they were natural scouts. Our men were ponderous, uncouth pitmen from Tyneside and the Clyde. But we chose out a small body of them who could shoot better than their fellows and called them snipers, and behold, they *were* snipers. We gave them telescopes and periscopes, and observers, and set them in odd corners, and told them to snipe. And by slow degrees they became interested and active and expert, and killed many Turks. The third time we came to those trenches we could move about with comparative freedom.

In all this Harry took a leading part, for the battalion scout officer was one of the first casualties, and Harry, who had had some training as a scout in the ranks, was appointed in his place. In this capacity he was in charge of the improvised snipers, and all day moved about the line from post to post, encouraging and correcting. All this he did with characteristic energy and enthusiasm, and tired himself out with long wanderings in the scorching sun.

In those trenches all movement was an intense labour. The sun blazed always into the suffocating ditch, where no breath of air came; the men not on duty lay huddled wherever they could steal an inch of shade, with the flies crawling about their eyes and open mouths. Progress was a weary routine of squeezing past men, or stepping over men, or running into men round corners, as one stooped to escape death. In little niches in the wall were mess-tins boiling over box-wood fires, so that the eyes smarted from their smoke, and the air was full of the hot fumes; and everywhere was the stuffy smell of human flesh.

In the heat of the day these things produced in the healthiest man an intolerable irritation and fatigue: to a frail, sensitive youth like Harry his day-long rambles must have been torture; but though he too became touchy he pursued his task with determination, and would not be tempted away.

The rest of us, when not on watch, lay torpid all the hot hours in the shallow holes we had scratched behind the trench and called Company Headquarters. These places were roofed only with the inevitable waterproof sheet, and had there been any serious shelling, would have been death-traps. Into these dwellings came many strange animals, driven from their nests among the roots of the scrub—snakes, lizards, and hideous centipedes. Large, clumsy, winged things, which some said were locusts, fell into the trench, and for a few hours strove vainly to leap out again till they were trampled to death; they had the colour of ivory, and shone with bright tints in the sun like shot silk.

The men found tortoises derelict in near shell-holes, and set them to walk in the trench, and they too wandered sadly about till they disappeared, no man knew where. The flies were not yet at full strength, but they were very bad; and all day we wrestled with thirst. He was a lucky man who could sleep in the daylight hours, and when the cool evening came, beckoning him to sleep, he must rise and bestir himself for the work of the night.

Then all the line stirred with life again, with the cleaning of rifles thick with heavy dust, and the bustle of men making ready to "Stand to Arms." Now, indeed, could a man have slept when all the pests of the day had been exorcized by the cool dusk, and the bitter cold of the midnight was not yet come. But there was no sleep for any man, only watching and digging and carrying and working and listening. And so soon as Achi Baba was swathed in shadow, and the sun well down behind the westward islands, the Turk began his evening fusillade of rapid fire.



'W' BEACH, WHERE THE IMPOSSIBLE WAS ONCE PERFORMED

Admiral Wemyss, who watched the landing at "W" Beach, declared that "it seemed as though the impossible had been performed." A few months after that unforgettable exhibition of bravery "W" Beach had been transformed into a useful base for the troops. Top is the jetty built where, on April 25, heroes had been mown down by a murderous fire as they waded ashore. The lower photograph shows the cliffs up which these men scrambled, now excavated to make officers' dug-outs. On the beach is a heap of empty 18-pounder shell-cases which were awaiting shipment to be utilized again.

Imperial War Museum

MOVING LETTERS from an ANZAC DUG-OUT

by General Sir John Monash

OF General Sir John Monash, Captain Liddell Hart, the well-known military critic, wrote, "he probably had the greatest capacity for command in modern war among all who held command." A citizen soldier, by profession a civil engineer, General Monash commanded the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade in Gallipoli, and the following extracts from letters written to his wife and daughter, while on the Peninsula, bear witness to his deep admiration for the sterling qualities of his troops

Anzac, May 30, 1915.

Now that I am back, I am free to say that the time I spent with Ian Hamilton was at Imbros harbour, on the R.M.S. Arcadian. I learn that I was the very first officer of the whole Mediterranean Expedition who has been honoured by a personal invitation. On my return to Anzac yesterday I learned to my pleasure that I had been "mentioned in dispatches." About twenty in all of my brigade (including H.Q. and the four battalions) have been so mentioned, and I dare say some of them will get decorations. They gave Bridges [Major-Gen. William Bridges, mortally wounded in the field] his K.C.B. after his death.

This morning we had another tough fight. The position at Anzac lies in the form of a rough triangle. Our front is divided into four sections, of which mine is section number three at the salient or apex of the triangle; number one is held by the 3rd Brigade, number two by the 1st, number three by the 4th, and number four by the New Zealand Brigade. Owing to its position at the head of Monash Valley (the name given to the main valley running up the triangle), this salient is subject to constant attacks day and night.

AT three o'clock this morning (we usually wake and stand to arms at three-thirty) the Turks fired a mine just under No. 3 trenches in my central post, known as Quinn's Post, and wrecked a group of trenches. They followed this up with a shower of bombs, and about a hundred of them rushed this portion of the trench. It took us two hours to get them out with bayonet, rifle, artillery and bombs: only seventeen were got out alive, the rest were killed, as were also at least another hundred who counter-attacked.

The 13th Battalion was manning the post at the time, supported by the 15th, and both did splendidly. Burnage [Lt.-Col. J. G. Burnage] was hit by a bomb and had both arms wounded. This is the first casualty among my C.O.s. Major Quinn was killed.

Although worn out with five weeks of this trench warfare, the men behaved like heroes. Their battle discipline is perfect. They never flinch and never hesitate. We have got our battle procedure now thoroughly well organized. To a stranger it would probably look like a disturbed ant-heap with everybody running a different way, but the thing is really a triumph of organization. There are orderlies carrying messages, staff officers with orders, lines of ammunition carriers, water carriers, bomb carriers, stretcher bearers, burial parties, first-aid men, reserves, supports, signallers, telephonists, engineers, digging parties, sandbag parties, periscope hands, pioneers, quartermaster's parties, and reinforcing troops, running about all over the place, apparently in confusion, but yet everything works as smoothly as on a peace parade, although the air is thick with clamour and bullets and bursting shells and bombs and flares. The remarkable intelligence and initiative of the men are most helpful. Most of my officers are now men who have been promoted from the ranks for gallantry in action, and they are really fine.

ALSO they are humane and gentlemanly fighters. I saw a sight today which is to the eternal credit of Australian soldiers. After we had retaken the temporarily lost trenches, we found about sixteen or seventeen Turks in a sap both ends of which we held. The men might have easily killed the lot. But they waited while an interpreter was sent for, and the Turks were persuaded to surrender—all while the men's blood was up, and they had seen their mates blown to bits by these very men. But this was not all.

Scarcely had these Turks been disarmed and lined up to be searched, when our boys crowded round them with water-bottles, and biscuits which they devoured ravenously, and then gave them cigarettes, and all the while



GREATEST OF TEMPORARY SOLDIERS

Major-General Sir John Monash is here seen outside his headquarters at Glisy in May 1918, when he was in command of the Australian Corps in France. After the war he returned to Australia and resumed his work as an engineer until his death in 1931.

Imperial War Museum



BOATLOADS OF BRAVE MEN BOUND FOR BATTLE

Except in the case of the River Clyde, when a transport was run ashore, all the troops landed in Gallipoli had to be brought ashore in the boats of the men-of-war and transports. They were towed close into the shore by naval launches, and here is a "tow" approaching land. The end boats have their oars ready to make the last pull to the beach when they have cast off from the tow. These men are being landed to reinforce the Australians at Gaba Tepe, who had been hard pressed to hold the stretch of ground that they had won at this important point.

lines of stretcher-bearers were carrying past our dead and wounded. Gallantry can surely touch no higher pinnacle.

HAD they set upon these beaten men and bayoneted them to death, no one could have greatly wondered after the death and torture they had spread amongst us. It was touching, too, to see the gratitude of the wretched prisoners, who wept copiously and kissed our hands. One old fellow went on his knees and made a long speech to me in Turkish, with many salaams and gestures of homage. The public of Australia will never fully understand the admiration which all the British sailors and soldiers have for our troops.

As I write this letter in my dug-out, I am looking out on a hillside which contains the bivouac of the 14th Battalion, where the men have been living for five weeks in squalor and dirt, in rain and shine, and most of them in rags; yet they are laughing and singing and joking and indulging in chaff and horse-play until it is their turn again tomorrow to face the awful ordeal of the trenches for a forty-eight hours' relief. There is only one epithet that comes to the lips of every general who has come into our lines, and that is "You splendid fellows." And this good spirit of soldierly endurance feeds and grows upon itself. . . .

Reserve Gully, Anzac Cove,
June 7, 1915.

DID I write in any of my letters about the armistice? This took place on May 24. It really began on May 22 by our hearing, from a trench about fifty yards in front of what is known as Courtney's Post, during a lull in the firing, cries of "Docteur, Docteur," and the waving of a Red Crescent flag. I sent out Dr. McGregor and Dr. Loughran with an orderly carrying a Red Cross flag, and instantly from all over the place sprang up Turks out of their trenches waving white flags, white rags, and Red Crescent pennants.

The doctors called back that the enemy wanted an armistice for the burying of their dead (at this time there were quite 5,000 of their dead lying in front of our trenches), so I asked for a staff officer to come forward, and a very smart young Turkish officer, smartly dressed, came up and spoke in very good French. I told him I had no power to treat, that this would have to be arranged between the Army Corps commanders and with proper Articles of Armistice; that his commander

had better send an accredited parlementaire under a white flag along the beach from Gaba Tepe to meet our parlementaire half-way, to discuss the matter.

THIS was at four-thirty, and I gave them ten minutes to get all their men back into their trenches or we should fire on them. That same night General Birdwood sent out a letter to General Liman von Sanders practically repeating the terms of my offer, and sure enough next day a meeting took place and drew up an agreement for an armistice from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on May 24. It would take too long to describe all the details of it. Suffice it to say that the Turks observed all the rules most punctiliously, even better than we did.

I will give you one instance of this. While I was up on Pope's Hill with General Godley [Major-Gen. Sir Alexander Godley, commanding "Anzac" Division], we noticed a Turk about 100 yards away trying to repair a loophole in a Turkish trench. We signed to a Turkish officer, pointing to it, and he at once understood and ran over to the man and gave him a sound belting with a stick. He then returned to us and still in sign language, with a polite salute, expressed his regrets at the stupidity of the soldier, and then very politely intimated that he would esteem it a favour if we refrained from using our field-glasses (because, of course, doing so would give us an unfair advantage). The burying went on all day, and precisely at five we were all at it again hammer and tongs ; and now there are several thousand more of their dead for them to bury. . . .

Anzac, June 22, 1915.

I am the only brigadier of the whole crowd at Anzac who has not been disabled in some way: [Brig.-Gen. H. N.] MacLaurin killed, [Lt.-Gen. Hon. Sir J. W.] M'Cay wounded in the knee, [Major-Gen. E.] Sinclair-Maclagan completely knocked out with nerve strain, [Lt.-Gen. Sir H.] Chauve' has pleurisy, Hughes has ptomaine poisoning, and [Brig.-Gen.] F. Johnston has

OVER THE CLIFFS OF HELLES

Above the steep cliffs of Cape Helles, which the first troops to land in Gallipoli had to storm with terrible losses, there is fairly level ground covered with scrub and undergrowth but affording no cover. Men of the R.N.D. are seen in this really remarkable photograph advancing on the open ground after the cliffs had been won. They are wearing the drill uniforms and pith helmets which the high temperatures in Gallipoli made advisable.





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THEY WILL BE READY WHEN THE TIME COMES

These two men are manning a machine-gun nest in the trenches at Gallipoli in April 1915. Cut through the sandy soil, the trench affords good protection against anything but a direct hit. In the shadow beneath the sandbagged parapet is their weapon—a machine-gun—and a belt of cartridges is being carefully prepared so that there will be no hitch when the next attack comes.

a touch of mild enteric. So I am the only brigade commander who has kept going since the beginning without a break. I eat very sparingly, drink only boiled water, and take plenty of exercise, so that I never feel either discomfort or fatigue. The weather is now very warm, although the nights are deliciously cool; but the flies are dreadful, and make life between eleven and four a real burden.

We manage to make ourselves fairly comfortable in our bivouacs. My home is a hole in the side of the hill, about 6 feet by 7 feet and 4 feet deep. The sides are built up with sandbags and the roof consists of three waterproof sheets lashed together. Biscuit-boxes serve as tables, chairs, cupboards and other furniture. I have my valise to sleep on, and get a daily bath out of a canvas bucket with a sponge; and at rarer intervals a dip in the sea. We dine in the open, and our cook, now that we have an occasional issue of flour, does us quite well. . . .

Anzac, June 27, 1915.

For the birthday greetings which I know are on the way from you all, I send, in anticipation, my very grateful thanks. Although I know your thoughts are with me today, and that you will be worrying because my fiftieth birthday will be left without celebration, yet I am sure it will please you to know that I have by no means been forgotten.

THE fact got about somehow, and General Godley sent me a birthday cake, cooked by Lady Godley (who is running a Convalescent Home in Alexandria). All my C.O.s lined up at my dugout at 6 a.m. to congratulate me and shake my hand, the Army Service Corps sent me a present of tobacco and matches (a most welcome gift; wooden matches at 1s. a small box), Norman Young gave me a bottle of champagne, 14th Battalion sent collective greetings, and the headquarters cook scoured around and prepared for me a specially sumptuous four-course dinner. All day long officers from near and far came to wish me happy returns—so that, with the feeling that I have earned the good wishes of so many people, I have really had a very happy birthday under the circumstances.

ONE of my company commanders in the 13th Battalion was field officer for the day, and had to go around the bivouacs to inspect the cleanliness. We are all so crowded in this steep valley that the companies and battalions are somewhat mixed up. He came upon a quartermaster's store and kitchen. "Disgraceful!" quoth he. "Never saw such a mess! Don't your platoon commander supervise you? What must your company commander be thinking of? Don't he come near you to see such a mess? What company do you belong to?" The terrified cook stared blankly at him. "Can't you answer me? What company do you belong to?" "Yours, sir," said the cook.

MOUNTAINS of DEAD in VALLEYS of MYRTLE

by The Hon. Aubrey Herbert

AFTER some time in hospital on account of a serious wound incurred near Compiègne at the beginning of the war (see 'Locusts of Steel,' pages 129–132), the Hon. Aubrey Herbert was passed fit for active service and was sent to Gallipoli, taking part in the first landing. In this chapter he describes life on the Peninsula during the summer of 1915 and gives a detailed account of the armistice referred to by General Monash in page 392

FROM the third week in May to the third week in June was the kernel of our time at Anzac. We had grown accustomed to think of the place as home, and of the conditions of our life as natural and permanent. . .

During this month we were not greatly troubled. The men continued to make the trenches impregnable, and were contented. It was in some ways a curiously happy time.

The New Zealanders and the Australians were generally clothed by the sunlight, which fitted them better than any tailor, with a red-brown skin, and only on ceremonial occasions did they wear their belts and accoutrements.

Our sport was bathing, and the Brotherhood of the Bath was rudely democratic. There was at Anzac a singularly benevolent officer, but for all his geniality a strong disciplinarian, devoted to military observances. He was kind to all the world, not forgetting himself, and he had developed a kindly figure. No insect could resist his contours. Fleas and bugs made passionate love to him, inlaying his white skin with a wonderful red mosaic. One day he undressed and, leaving nothing of his dignity with his uniform, he mingled superbly with the crowd of bathers. Instantly he received a hearty blow upon his tender red and white shoulder, and a cordial greeting from some democrat of Sydney or of Wellington : " Old man, you've been amongst the biscuits ! " He drew himself up to rebuke this presumption, then dived for the sea ; for, as he said, " What's the good of telling one naked man to salute another naked man, especially when neither have got their caps ? "

This month was marked by a featnre that is rare in modern warfare. We had an armistice for the burial of the dead, which is described in the diary.

On the Peninsula we were extremely anxious for an armistice for many reasons. We wished, on all occasions, to be able to get our wounded in after a fight, and we believed—or, at least, the writer was confident—that an arrangement could be come to. We were also very anxious to bury our dead. Rightly or wrongly, we thought that G.H.Q., living on its perfumed island, did not consider how great was the abomination of life upon the cramped and stinking battlefield that was our encampment, though this was not a charge that any man would have dreamed of bringing against Sir Ian Hamilton. . . .

Friday, May 21, 1915. *Kaba Tepe.* SAW Sir Ian Hamilton again this morning. The Turks are said to have put up a white flag, and to have massed behind it in their trenches, intending to rush us. Left with four " Arcadians."

There was a parley yesterday while I was away. The Turks had put up some white flags, but it was not a case of bad faith, as the " Arcadians " believed. We are said to have shot one Red Crescent man by mistake. General Walker went out to talk to the Turks, just like that. Both sides had, apparently, been frightened. I walked back to Reserve Gully with the general, to see the new brigade. The evening sun was shining on the myrtles in all the gullies, and the new brigade was singing and whistling up and down the hills, while fires crackled everywhere.

Saturday, May 22, 1915. *Kaba Tepe.* S. B. [a friend of the author] was sent out yesterday to talk to the Turks, but he did not take a white flag with him, and was sniped and bruised. . . . This morning, suddenly, I was sent for. S. B. and I hurried along the beach and crossed the barbed wire entanglements. We went along by the sea, through heavy showers of rain, and at last met a fierce Arab officer and a



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THE NAVAL DIVISION WELL DUG IN

These men of the Royal Naval Division are in a front line trench at Gallipoli in April 1915. The Division was about 11,000 strong and consisted of Royal Marines from Chatham, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Deal, and the Drake, Hood, Nelson, Howe, and Anson Battalions of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. After the withdrawal from Gallipoli they fought with equal valour in many actions on the Western Front.



L.N.A.

SUCCOUR FOR ANZACS—FROM HELL TO HOSPITAL

As the Gallipoli campaign continued, the evacuation of the wounded became an increasingly pressing need, and ships were brought near the Peninsula to take away the long and almost ceaseless stream of casualties. Transport between the ships and shore was only possible by means of shallow-draught lighters owing to the slowly shelving coast, a feature that complicated an already difficult task. In this photograph a lighter is seen alongside a hospital ship with stretcher cases and walking wounded awaiting their removal.



COOL LUXURY AFTER DAYS OF TORMENT

After the storming and capture of the beaches at Gallipoli, the British forces consolidated their positions, though only with the greatest difficulty. For weeks and months they endured the discomfort of stifling heat by day, the cold at night, and the ever-present menace of the enemy snipers and artillery fire.



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Lucky indeed were these men who were able to bathe in the sea at Helles. Away from the inadequate, bullet-swept trenches and the shallow dug-outs inland, the troops enjoyed these bathing parades to the full in spite of the danger of shell-fire on some of the beaches.



SHE WENT DOWN IN SEVEN MINUTES—A GALLIPOLI DISASTER *Abrahams*

The sinking of the battleship Majestic off Cape Helles on May 27, 1915, was due to the skill and daring of the commander of the German submarine U 21. With her torpedo nets out, the Majestic was anchored as close inshore as possible in a berth that seemed perfectly safe. The History of Naval Operations relates how a periscope was seen within 400 yards of her and a torpedo was observed coming through one of the few gaps in the screen of transports. It was an accurate shot and struck the Majestic amidships. Another followed, and in seven minutes the Majestic, once the pride of the Channel Fleet, capsized and sank. Fortunately nearly all the officers and men were saved.



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VITAL WIRES AND EAGER EARS

The establishment of communication between General and Divisional Headquarters, the scattered fighting areas and supporting naval vessels, was one of the many tasks that had to be maintained without respite by the land forces at Gallipoli. Here is a scene inside a divisional headquarters signals tent on the Peninsula where signallers dispatched and received by wireless and land wires the laconic but vital messages of warfare.

wandery-looking Turkish lieutenant. We sat and smoked in fields splendid with poppies, the sea glittering by us.

Then Kemal Bey arrived and went into Anzac with S. B., while I went off as hostage.

S. B. and Kemal Bey, as they went, provided the Australian escort with much innocent laughter. Our barbed wire down to the sea consisted only of a few light strands, over which the Turk was helped by having his legs raised high for him. S. B., however, wished him, as he was blindfolded, to believe that this defence went on for at least twenty yards. So the Turk was made to do an enormously high, stiff goose-step over the empty air for that space, as absurd a spectacle to our men as I myself was to be, later, to the Turks. The Australians were almost sick from internal laughter.

Diary. Kemal Bey asked for a hostage, and I went out. They bandaged my eyes, and I mounted a horse and rode off with Sahib Bey. We went along by the sea for some time, for I could hear the waves. Then we went round and round—to puzzle me, I suppose—and ended up in a tent in a grove of olives, where they took the handkerchief off, and Sahib Bey said: "This is the beginning of a lifelong friendship." . . .

We had cheese and tea and coffee, Sahib Bey offering to eat first to show me that it was all right, which I said was nonsense. He said: "It may not be political economy, but there are some great advantages in war. It's very comfortable when there are no exports, because it means that all the things stay at home and are very cheap." He tried to impress me with their well-being. He said he hated all politicians and had sworn never to read the papers. The Turks had come sadly into the war against us, otherwise gladly. They wanted to regain the prestige that they had lost in the Balkans. . . .

He said, after I had talked to him: "There are many of us who think like you, but we must obey. We know that you are just and that Moslems thrive under you, but you have made cruel mistakes by us, the taking of those two ships and the way in which they were taken." He asked me a few questions, which I put aside. He had had a conversation with Dash the day before, when we parleyed. Dash is a most innocent creature. He had apparently told him that G.H.Q. was an awful bore, and also the number of Turkish prisoners we had taken. . . .

Tuesday, May 25, 1915. *Kaba Tepe.*

We had the truce yesterday. I was afraid something might go wrong, but it all went off all right. Skeen, Blamey (now Brigadier-General, Australian Forces), Howse, V.C. (now Surgeon-General and Director-General, Medical Services of Australia), Hough and I started early. Skeen offered me breakfast, but, like a fool, I refused. He put some creosote on my handkerchief. We were at the rendezvous on the beach at 6.30. Heavy rain soaked us to the skin. At 7.30 we met the Turks, Miralai Izzedin, a pleasant, rather sharp little man; Arif, the son of Achmet Pasha, who gave me a card, "Sculpteur et Peintre" and "Etudiant de Poésie." I saw Sahib and had a few words with



A BIG GUN FOR GALLIPOLI AT LAST

This remarkable photograph shows a big gun being landed at Cape Helles. Long lines of men of the Queen Elizabeth and the R.N.V.R. are dragging it from the beach to the high ground, no tractors being available. On the left is the lighter on which it was brought ashore. After the first landing, Cape Helles was the chief source of supply for the Gallipoli force. Guns, stores, rations, everything that the troops required, were landed there on specially built quays. At the time when this photograph was taken the beach was shelled every evening by the Turks. A little below the tents half-way up the slope is a grave where five officers and eighty-two men were buried.



Imperial War Museum

WHERE THE FATE OF THOUSANDS WAS DECIDED: G.H.Q. AT KEPHALOS

During the landing at Gallipoli Sir Ian Hamilton's headquarters was on board H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth, but on April 30 it was transferred to the transport Arcadian. At the end of May, when the position had become stabilized, G.H.Q. was again transferred, this time to the shore at Kephalos Bay, seen above, where it remained until the later months of the campaign. The tents occupied by the General and his staff are in the centre of the camp. In the distance can be seen the hangar of the airship Silver Baby.

him, but he did not come with us. Fahreddin Bey came later.

We walked from the sea and passed immediately up the hill, through a field of tall corn filled with poppies, then another cornfield; then the fearful smell of death began as we came upon scattered bodies.

We mounted over a plateau and down through gullies filled with thyme, where there lay about 4,000 Turkish dead. It was indescribable. One was grateful for the rain and the grey sky. A Turkish Red Crescent man came and gave me some antiseptic wool with scent on it, and this they renewed frequently.

THERE were two wounded crying in that multitude of silence. The Turks were distressed, and Skeen strained a point to let them send water to the first wounded man, who must have been a sniper crawling home. I walked over to the second, who lay with a high circle of dead that made a mound round him, and gave him a drink from my water-bottle, but Skeen called me to come on, and I had to leave the bottle. Later a Turk gave it back to me.

The Turkish captain with me said: "At this spectacle even the most gentle must feel savage, and the most savage must weep." The dead fill acres of ground, mostly killed in the one big attack, but some recently. They fill the myrtle-grown gullies.

One saw the result of machine-gun fire very clearly; entire companies annihilated—not wounded, but killed, their heads doubled under them with the impetus of their rush and both hands clasping their bayonets. It was as if God had breathed in their faces, as "the Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold."

THE line was not easy to settle. Neither side wanted to give its position or its trenches away. At the end Skeen agreed that the Turks had been fair. We had not been going very long when we had a message to say that the Turks were entrenching at Johnson's Jolly. Skeen had, however, just been there and seen that they were doing nothing at all. He left me at Quinn's Post, looking at the communication trench through which I had spoken to the Turks. Corpses and dead men blown to bits everywhere. Richards was with me part of the time: easy to get on with; also a gentleman called indifferently by the men Mr. or Major Tibbs.

A good deal of friction at first. The trenches were ten to fifteen yards apart. Each side was on the *qui vive* for treachery. In one gully the dead had got to be left unburied. It was impossible to bury them without one side seeing the position of the other. In the Turkish parapet there were many bodies buried. Fahreddin told Skeen he wanted to bury them, "but," he said, "we cannot take them out without putting something in their place." Skeen agreed, but said that this concession was not to be taken advantage of to repair the trench. This was a difficult business.

When our people complained that the Turks were making loopholes, they invited me into their trench to look. Then the Turks said that we were stealing their rifles; this came from the dead land where we could not let them go. I went down, and when I got back, very hot, they took my word for it that we were not. There was some trouble because we were always crossing each other's lines. I talked to the Turks, one of whom pointed to the graves. "That's politics," he said. Then he pointed to the dead bodies and said: "That's diplomacy. God pity all of us poor soldiers."

STRANGE BURIAL SERVICE

MUCH of this business was ghastly to the point of nightmare. I found a hardened old Albanian chaoush and got him to do anything I wanted. Then a lot of other Albanians came up, and I said: "Tunya tyeta." (The usual Albanian greeting.) I had met some of them in Janina. They began clapping me on the back and cheering while half a dozen funeral services were going on all round, conducted by the chaplains. I had to stop them. I asked them if they did not want an Imam for a service over their own dead, but the old Albanian pagan roared with laughter and said that their souls were all right. They could look after themselves. Not many signs of fanaticism. One huge, savage-looking Anatolian looked curses at me. Greeks came up and tried to surrender to me, but were ordered back by the Turks pretty roughly.

Considering the number of their men we had killed, they remained extraordinarily unmoved and polite. They wouldn't have, if we had been Russians. Blamey came to say that Skeen had lost H. and wanted me, so he, Arif and I walked to the sea. The burying had not been well done. It was sometimes impossible to do it. . . . As we went, we took our rifles from the Turkish side, minus their bolts, and gave the Turks their rifles in the same way. . . .

Our men gave cigarettes to the Turks, and beyond the storm-centre at Quinn's Post the feeling was all right. We sat down and sent men to look for Skeen. Arif was nervous and almost rude. Then Skeen came. He told me to get back as quickly as possible to Quinn's Post, as I said I was nervous at being away, and to retire the troops at 4 and the white-flag men at 4.15. I said to Arif: "Everybody's behaved very well. Now we must take care that nobody loses his head. Your men won't shoot you and my men won't shoot me, so we must walk about, otherwise a gun will go off and everybody will get shot." But Arif faded away.

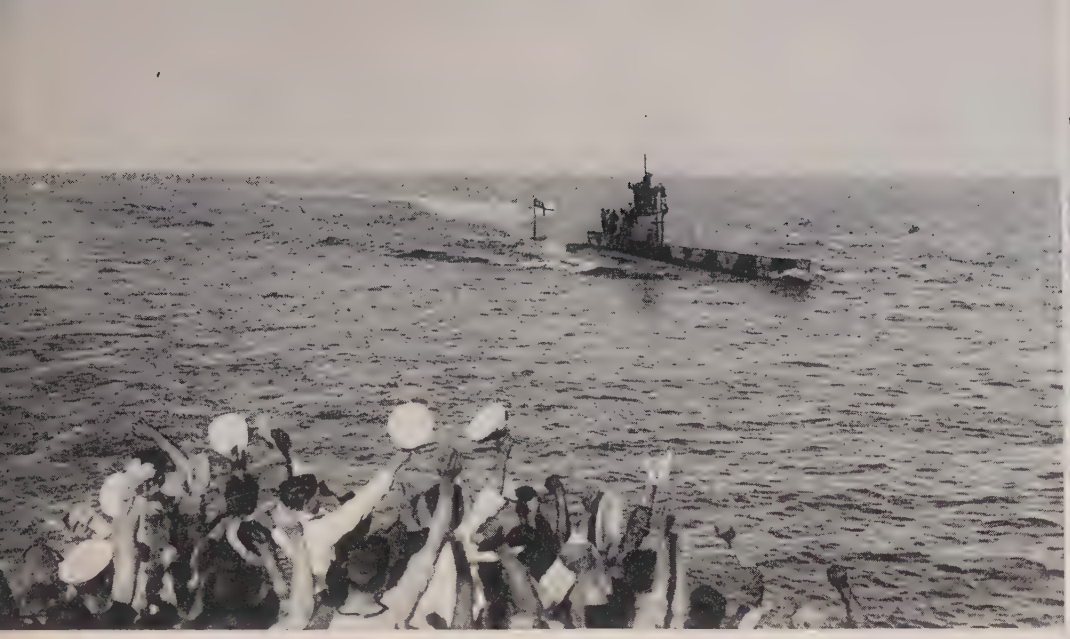
I GOT back as quickly as possible. Blamey went away on the left. I then found that the Turks' time was eight minutes ahead of ours, and put on our watches. The Turks asked me to witness their taking the money from their dead, as they had no officer there. They were very worried by having no officer, and asked me if any one were coming. I, of course, had no idea, but I told them I would see that they were all right. They were very patient. . . .

The burying was finished some time before the end. There were certain tricks on both sides.

Our men and the Turks began fraternizing, exchanging badges, etc. I had to keep them apart. At 4 o'clock the Turks came to me for orders. I do not believe this could have happened anywhere else. I retired their troops and ours, walking along the line. At 4.7 I retired the white-flag men, making them shake hands with our men. Then I came to the upper end. About a dozen Turks came out. I chaffed them, and said that they would shoot me next day. They said, in a horrified chorus: "God forbid!" The Albanians laughed and cheered, and said, "We will never shoot you."

END OF AN INTERLUDE

THEN the Australians began coming up, and said: "Good-bye, old chap; good luck!" And the Turks said: "Oghur Ola gule gule gedejekseniz, gule gule gelejekseniz." (Smiling may you go and smiling come again.) Then I told them all to get into their trenches, and unthinkingly went up to the Turkish trench and got a deep salaam from it. I told them that neither side would fire for twenty-five minutes after they had got into the trenches. One Turk was seen out away on our left, but there was nothing to be done, and I think he was all right. A couple of rifles had gone off about twenty minutes before the end, but Potts and I went hurriedly to and fro seeing it was all right. At last we dropped into our trenches, glad that the strain was over. I walked back with Temperley. I got some raw whisky for the infection in my throat, and iodine for where the barbed wire had torn my feet. There was a hush over the Peninsula. . . .





THEY WON THEIR V.C.s UNDER THE DARDANELLES

The commanders of two submarines were awarded the V.C. for daring exploits in the Dardanelles: they were Lieutenant N. D. Holbrook of submarine B 11, and Lieutenant-Commander M. E. Nasmith of submarine E 11. In the photograph above, men of the destroyer Grampus are cheering Lieut.-Commander Nasmith and his brave crew after their daring exploit in August 1915, when they penetrated into the Straits and sank the Turkish battleship Barbarousse-Haireddine. Right, B 11, which dived under five lines of Turkish mines in the entrance to the Straits and torpedoed the Turkish cruiser Messudieh, is seen alongside her depot ship. Lieutenant Holbrook is wearing a white sweater. Below is Lieut.-Commander Nasmith with the crew on board his submarine. He is the centre figure standing on the conning tower.





CHANGE OF SCENE AT DEADLY 'V' BEACH

When the British made their assault at "V" beach on the morning of April 25, 1915, that stretch of sand upon the Gallipoli Peninsula became the scene of a monstrous holocaust as the Turks poured rifle and machine-gun fire into the midst of the hapless landing parties. Yet within a few weeks the place took on the comparatively peaceful aspect shown in this photograph. With the Turkish troops forced farther inland the storm in the area died out, and there arose a depot crammed with men and the accoutrements of war.

I Was a BOY at GALLIPOLI

Young Terrier's Story of Cape Helles

by Pte. Fred T. Wilson

MANY a stirring tale has been told in these pages by sturdy war veterans. By way of contrast, this account of his experiences at Gallipoli is furnished by one who was scarcely more than a boy at the time. Pte. Wilson saw four and a half years' active service with the 1/6th Manchester Regt. (T.F.), and when, after eight months' service in Egypt, he landed at Cape Helles in May 1915, one of the first Territorials in the front line, he was barely 18 years old

WHEN the Territorials in 1914 were asked to volunteer for active service, I went with the others. I left England in September 1914, when I was seventeen years old.

We embarked at Southampton in the s.s. Corsican, and reached Alexandria seventeen days later.

In Alexandria and Cairo eight months went by and my experiences were varied. War seemed very distant, the Egyptians themselves appeared to be quite unmoved by our presence or the reason of our coming. I am afraid we didn't get their true opinions.

It seemed to me in those days that the main idea in the Army was to get you as fed-up as possible, so that you welcomed any change. They caught us in this mood when orders came to embark for Gallipoli ; so lustily we sang all the way from Cairo to Alexandria, sitting in cattle trucks, regulating the beat of the song to the clip of the wheels.

At Alexandria, after hours of delay, we embarked on a captured German liner, the Derfflinger. Iron plates above, iron plates below, and riveted iron plates each side, bordered our bedroom. Closed and covered portholes kept out light and air, the darkness being partially relieved by a few electric globes in cages. In this half-light, confusion attended the hanging of our hammocks as we tripped and fell over bits of unfamiliar ship's tackle. All this appeared more ridiculous when we slept on deck owing to the heat down below. We slept as we were. Nobody thought of undressing.

FOR three days and three nights four men lived where one would have been cramped in that iron-cased floating stinkhole, eating badly cooked food and drinking warm water. By the night of the third day, as we neared Gallipoli, we were in the mood for anything. We'd fight anybody for anything ; we didn't care what.

Looking towards the land, we could see flashes here and there and hear intermittent firing, punctuated occasionally by the boom of heavy guns. Rumours were numerous, but the only one that proved true was that we disembarked that night. With all lights out, we crept slowly in towards the land, alongside the River Clyde, and were taken ashore in flat-bottomed barges. Everything was quiet, as though the guns were silenced to give us welcome. It was raining. Raining as it can only in the East. The barges grounded and we got no wetter by wading ashore. Everything was in a wonderful state of chaos. Nobody met us. Friend or foe could have done what we did. It was May 1915, and the Gallipoli campaign was new. Soaked kits are heavier than dry ones, and we were glad to lie down on a cliff-top, in the pouring rain and mud, and sleep.

MY FIRST SIGHT OF DEATH

THE sun shone in the morning and we looked round. We were all eager for information, and this was given to us readily by a few wounded Lancashire Fusiliers from the front line.

Cape Helles, where we had landed, was the general stepping-off place, and a mile of land had been taken. The loss of life had been out of all proportion to this gain, due to the prepared positions of the Turks right down to the water edge, which enabled them to mow down our men with ridiculous ease. Very bitter were our informants as they related the hurried preparations for battle, the taking of practically impregnable positions, and the terrific hardships endured under a constant bombardment.

That morning we were treated to a new sight : a Turkish prisoner, bandaged about the head, lying on the ground, his face, hands and arms painted green, and wearing a green uniform. He had been shot down from a gun-nest in a tree, and, before he had been located, his accurate sniping had accounted for a considerable number of officers. Now he was slowly dying.

His eyes searched our faces, and no doubt read pity there—the pity that goes out to a dog with a broken leg. We had not yet acquired the callousness of war veterans.

Enemy aircraft kept us on the move all that morning. They seemed to have command of the skies. No airmen of ours challenged their activities. A few anti-aircraft guns tried to bring them down, but did no apparent damage.

More troops arrived during the day and it was interesting to watch them land under heavy shell-fire that sank a few barges and scattered us on land as they fell short of the water. The daily bathing parade in the sea continued, however, and the shelling did not seem to upset the troops swimming about near the beach.

THE OLD HAND KNEW

THAT afternoon we paraded ready for a move up towards the front line. A shell blew away a few of our men in the rear company, then, regardless of procedure, we turned right and " Follow me ! " was sufficient for the moment. The leading officer was an old hand.

He knew the way or we might have marched straight into the enemy. A series of gullies, about 50 feet deep, one joining with another, ran in all directions, and up and down these we twisted and turned for about three hours, stopping occasionally for rest. At dusk we were told to stand easy until further orders were received. We were then on a lip on one side of a gully about 500 yards from the front line. As night advanced the flies left us. Then the shelling became more intense and rifles and machine-guns helped to swell the noise. After an hour this subsided and the gully became full of other sounds. The small stream that ran in the bed, full of slime and blood-coloured in patches, was full of frogs. Hundreds of them, all croaking together. Very weird and uncanny this was in the darkness and unnatural silence. We trod on them as we moved off, but the croaking continued.

We now heard officially that we were to relieve the New Zealanders in the front-line trench, and, led by the same officer, we pushed off in a long single file.

The communication trenches from the front line went back about ten yards, then a dash over open country before one reached the shelter of a gully. Leaving the gully, we had now to cross this open space before we could drop into the communication trenches. Only about 200 yards. Not far, we thought, but a long way when under fire. Here we got our first small taste of war.



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ONE OF GALLIPOLI'S FEW RESPITES

The lot of the soldiers in Gallipoli was in some ways harder than that of those in France and Flanders, for there were no rests in billets and no opportunities for the simple pleasures which even a small village behind the Western Front afforded. In Gallipoli a swim in the sea or such a quiet game of cards as these men are enjoying was the only respite from the bitter fighting and privations of the front line.

The enemy guessed a relief was taking place, for their machine-guns found us, and as the whine of bullets became more marked, we were ordered to lie down. I lost my first friend at that moment, and it was hard to realize he would never again share with me the things we both enjoyed. As I flopped down, my equipment falling on top of me, I felt the handle of a spade on the ground.

INSTINCTIVELY I covered my head with the spade end and, burying my ear in the mud, felt very well protected. I saw the man in front of me lying still with head well down, and waited with him for the next move. It came in the shape of a sergeant who, crawling up to both of us, wanted to know why the hell we didn't follow the others—we were keeping back all the men behind. I realized then my mistake in waiting for the man in front, and, crawling over him, I caught up with the others, who had waited after the break had been noticed. One by one we dropped into the communication trench with a splash. Last night's rain still lingered, finding no outlet. No comfort or safety was to be found in the trenches in those early days. Sandbags had not arrived. Dug-up dirt thrown out served as a shield from bullets, a shield that fell in when rain came, and a roughly cut step in the side of the trench served for a seat. We slept on the floor of the trench or propped up along the side. In the blackness of the night we stumbled and splashed along the trench. All we could do was to obey orders, and if we received none we thought we were doing right. We didn't know where we were or what might happen next. There was an awful din and the order for absolute silence had to be shouted from man to man! A stream of men going in the opposite direction ploughed their way through the mud past us—the New Zealanders going out. It was a tight squeeze and many a curse followed us as we tripped over one another or bumped them into the sides of the trench.

The guns were silent again now, and upon arriving at our appointed stations word came down the line to fire "fifteen rounds rapid" at the enemy trench. With fingers cold, wet, and fumbling, we loaded, fired as quickly as we could and got a volley in reply. This was our first shooting at the enemy even if we could see nothing, and proved so exciting that our discomfort was forgotten. The New Zealanders had now gone, and we Territorials held the line, or rather our part of it, for the first time. A great honour, and we meant, if possible, to do all we could to uphold that honour.

BY dawn, having "stood to" all the night, we were tired and hungry, and thought nothing much of the honour thrust upon us, but as the day became brighter we found interest enough in having a peep over the thrown-up dirt at the part of the landscape occupied by the Turk, and at the chaotic condition of No Man's Land.

Barbed wire there certainly was, but it hung in shreds from wooden posts, and nearer to us a small trickle of water flowed alongside the trench, coming through the trench side a little lower down. In this, opposite to where I stood, lay a couple of dead Turks. There was no need to tell us not to drink this water, but we had to later, after it had been boiled.

That day our time was taken up chiefly with making more comfortable the trench that served as a home, and in the days that followed there was no great excitement. . . .

Then a fifteen-hour bombardment by our guns commenced. The noise we now heard was terrific. A continual roar; thousands of big shells hurtling through the air at the same time. If more noise had been added it would have passed unnoticed, so great was the din, but the Turks did reply, as our casualties that night were very heavy. I was losing most of my friends. We were in the support trench at the time and received an order to carry ammunition for the gunners from the dumps. Dozens of us carried heavy shells through mud that was impassable for mules.

Instead of the fifteen hours, the bombardment lasted only seven hours. Ammunition had run out. There was only sufficient left for desultory shelling by our guns for one more day. The ammunition boats had not arrived according to schedule, and the bombardment took place, as we afterwards learned, to impress upon the enemy how well supplied we were with shells. A peculiar thing is war. The Turks could, this night, have driven us into the sea.

A WEEK later we advanced about fifty yards, half-way into No Man's Land, under a full moon. Our hectic digging with entrenching tools into the rock-like earth as we lay flat on the ground was a sporting chance given to the Turks to try a little sniping. Our barrage did not cover us well enough, and a large proportion of our men were killed. By dawn we were out of sight if we knelt down, and we did a lot of kneeling that day. We had no time that day to complete communication trenches back to the old line, so when the counter-attack came, no way of retreat was possible except over the intervening open high ground. Our guns got the range soon after the Turks attacked, but that didn't stop them, and, after a short hand-to-hand struggle, we had to give way.

It was a sorry retreat and our casualties, if not heavy, were ugly. I was surprised at what man is capable of enduring in a semi-conscious state; how he can stagger to safety, leaving parts of himself behind. When we got back our machine-guns opened fire and we laughed like maniacs as the Turkish advance crumpled and fell. That attack had failed.

So it went on, day after day, week after week; a bit forward here, a bit back there; very little ground gained and very little lost, but death always. Disease helped to swell the death-roll, but still the senseless game went on.

MEN INTO BEASTS

The Horrors of Anzac

by Digger Craven

DIGGER CRAVEN was in the Australian infantry during the weary months at Gallipoli. After the war he told his story to W. J. Blackledge, who transcribes it here. It has all the urgency of deeply recollected horror and provides a wonderful picture of the carnage and beastliness of the Mediterranean Campaign

SUDDENLY we were dragged from our diggings and thrust into the front line for an attack. This was the historic, ill-starred " demonstration " of the 28th of June. We in the trenches did not know then that this so-called attack was to be merely a " demonstration " to keep the enemy on our front while the 29th Division at Cape Helles made one more shot at capturing Achi Baba. It failed, but the Tommies on that front gained a thousand yards, and that was some victory for the Peninsula.

We attacked. Once out of the cover of our trenches and sap heads, and hell was let loose. Remember we made this attack after weeks of strain and drudgery, incessant trench warfare, listening-post duties, sentry duties, with every faculty on edge, existing with the perpetual head-bursting crack of snipers' bullets, the everlasting zoom and crash of shells tearing the nerves . . . We went into the attack crazed and stupefied with the heat, the stench, the fumes and dirt of belching shells. We were mad, stark, raving mad—out for blood, anybody's blood, anything to break the strain of that frightful tension.

It was the sort of thing that cannot be described. We met withering fire from the strongly entrenched Turks. We met newly wired positions. Men were trapped in the entangling barbs and shot to pieces while they struggled to free themselves. We leapt into a narrow gully, and into it from underground trenches poured a massed horde of Turks, for all the world as if vomited out of the bowels of the earth by some volcanic eruption.

Thereafter an inferno of slaughtering underground with cold steel, an exhibition of savagery by tormented bodies, clusters and little groups at each other's throats in a confined area which so cramped our actions that we fought at the crouch, jabbing and sticking, yelling and cursing, choking the cries of " Allah ! Allah ! " with bayonet thrusts, trampling dead and wounded while we went forward to meet more and more figures coming out of the earth, till the ground seemed literally to be spawning Turks.

It was a swift, incredibly ferocious attack that availed us nothing—nothing, that is, so far as we who participated in it could see. For we were commanded to retire, to fall back on our own lines. It was not to be an attack, but a demonstration ! We got back into our own lines and cursed our commanders for sending us out there merely to bring us back again. We were told it was to help our mates down in the south. That " victory " down there by the 29th Division cost us in the north a few hundred more casualties. We might have been excused for wondering what the hell it was all about. I am convinced that war-worn and weary Anzacs were never quite the same after those " demonstrations."

AS everyone now knows, Anzac was the key position of the whole Peninsula, for it faced the narrow waist leading to the Narrows of the Dardanelles. The 29th Division, together with the Naval Division and the French armies, beat themselves to death attacking six different and almost impregnable positions on the toe of the Peninsula ! Thousands of men were thrown away in order to hold an utterly useless position. Instead of demonstrating at Anzac, we should have concentrated our main attack there and used the worthless Cape Helles position for feints and demonstrations. Once astride the Peninsula from Anzac to the Narrows, all the Turks in the south right down to the toe would have been trapped, cut off from their base and source of supplies.

INSTEAD of which we frittered away our forces on no fewer than nine different fronts from Suvla Point in the north to "S" Beach in the south. That victory of a thousand yards could not be followed up because those responsible were starving the Gallipoli campaign of both men and munitions. It began as a muddle and it went on in the same fashion. More than a month was to pass before that victory could be followed up. During that time Johnny built himself new and stronger



ONE MORE POINT GAINED

While the Royal Naval Division were taking White House, seen in page 384, on May 6, 1915, British and French troops captured another position known as Brown House, seen in the photograph above. The Turks have fallen back and arms have been stacked, while beside the ruined wall a " flag wagger " is transmitting his message.

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trenches, and generally fortified his position. He did more. He rebuilt his army. The beaten and war-weary troops were withdrawn and reinforcements from the "very pick and flower of the Turkish Empire" took over the task of keeping the Allies hanging perilously to the edge of the cliffs round the coast.

With that demonstration at Anzac we started up trouble. At midnight of June 29–30, Johnny made his counter-attack. Enver Pasha sent an army of 30,000 strong "to drive the foreigners into the sea or never look upon his face again." The foreigners being us, the Anzacs, the "savages from the South Seas," as we learned from some of our prisoners.

They began the attack with a terrific artillery bombardment. The night was hideous with screaming of shells and the bellowing explosions. It seemed as if the whole of the Turkish artillery was concentrated on our lines. Never before had they pounded us with such a blasting volume of shot and shell. Some of our underground works were stove in, parapets were blown away in dense clouds of dust and flying debris. The fumes from the shells were so thick that men could not see, could not use their eyes, for they smarted and watered as if in a gas attack. But this was no gas attack. Johnny was throwing all he had at us. We knew what that meant. He was going to attack.

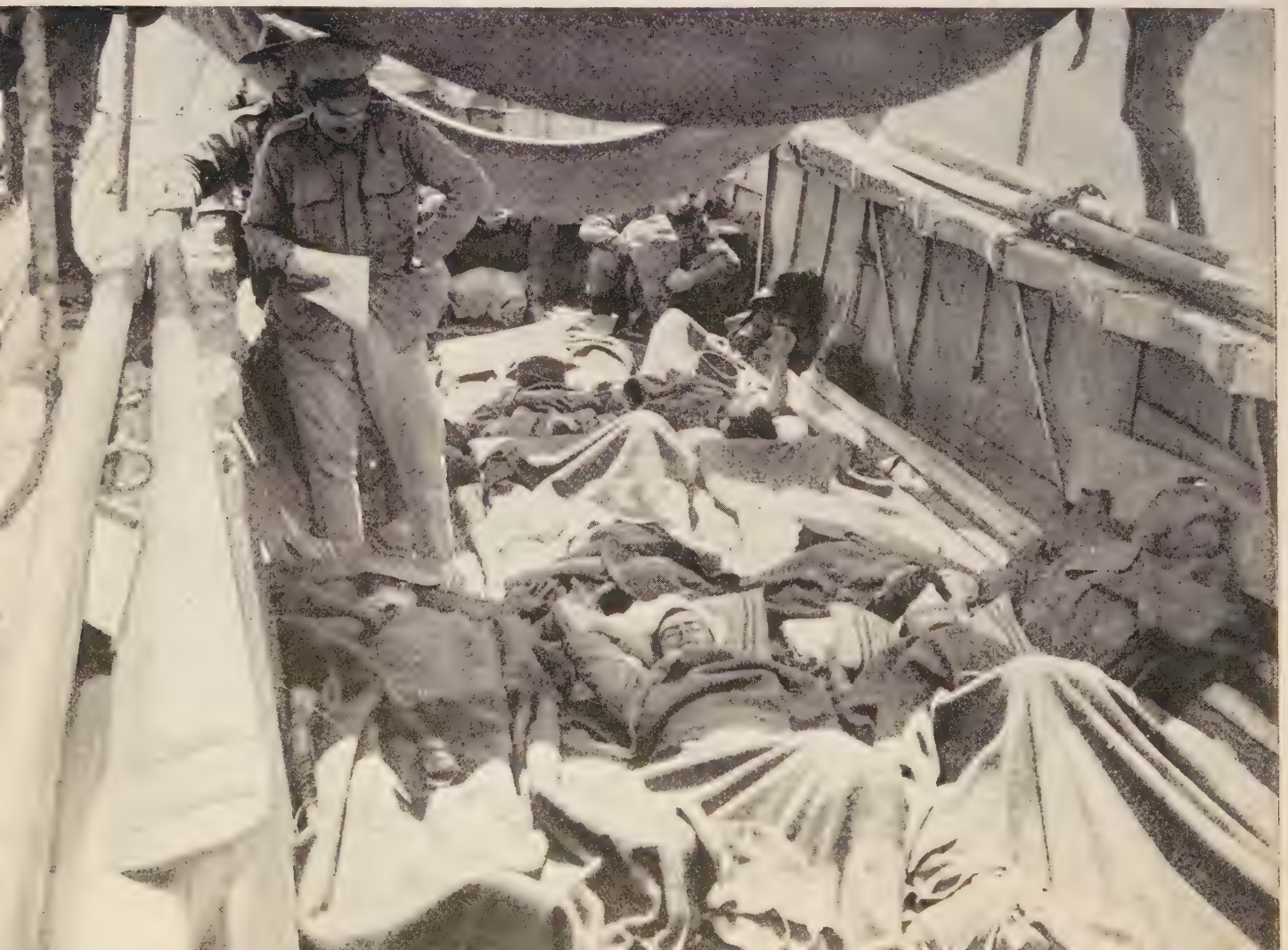
We were standing to on the fire-step, waiting . . It can be an agony, that waiting, while the shells shriek and roar and crash all around. It can be hell. It was a date one long to be remembered. It was a hellish date—as bad as anything that ever happened in my little orbit of the campaign.

Then they came—with "Allah" on their tongues and fiendish lust in their black eyes—dense masses of them racing towards us over No Man's Land, shoulder to shoulder. We bombed them, shelled them, shattered them with rifle-fire, shot great gaps into their massed ranks. They broke, wavered, went down in thousands. Others came up and took their places, tumbling and staggering over the dead and wounded, yelling of their faith, screaming every sort of dirty imprecation at the Christian dogs whom they would now drive into the sea.

And all we had to do was to stand firm and pot at them, knock them over like grotesque dummies in an Aunt Sally stall. There never was such slaughter on any front, never were so many killed and wounded in the short space of one night. It seemed to us in those dark hours before the dawn that we could not kill fast enough, for swiftly as we shot them down there were always others to take the gaps. They came on, drew nearer our lines. They were most definitely advancing. It appeared at one time that nothing could hold back the massed yelling hordes. Hundreds were brought to their knees within a few yards of our parapet. Bombs were thrown back and forth.

EXIT FROM THE MAJOR SCENE

While the struggle between British and Turks ebbed and flowed across the sun-scorched ground of the Gallipoli Peninsula, lighters and other craft bore away their pathetic cargoes of gravely wounded men from the scene of action. In this photograph Australian casualties are shown aboard a native boat that is standing by awaiting their transfer to a hospital ship. A lighter alongside a hospital ship is seen in page 395.





BOUND FOR BEACHES OF DEATH

The splendid fighting spirit of the Australian troops and their tenacity and unshaken courage in the face of the innumerable dangers which beset them later are moving highlights in the story of the Gallipoli campaign. Here is a photograph taken aboard one of the warships which carried those gallant "Diggers" and others of the expeditionary force across the Aegean Sea towards the grim Peninsula from which so many never returned.

Our tunnelling had not been in vain. We had at that time a number of "T" saps shooting out from under our front line trenches into No Man's Land. Each of these was built by mining underground straight out for several yards, then opening up with a cross-head like the head of the letter "T." The enemy stumbled into these camouflaged sap heads as they neared our lines and were terribly butchered before they had time to get over their surprise.

THAT underground fighting at Anzac was a little war of its own. It was a war in which the unwary Turk never had a chance to hit back. He fell in—in heaps, was clubbed or struck before he could rise to his knees. In some parts of the Anzac front there was a perfect network of tunnels, an entirely new sort of firing line prepared underground and complete with barbed wire entanglements. Bunches of the enemy were trapped in these—their unwary entry being the signal for a shower of bombs that blew them sky-high.

By dawn it was all over. Johnny retired. His wonderful army of 30,000 strong was utterly defeated with the loss of a quarter of its strength—between seven and eight thousand killed and wounded. For many days afterwards we could hear the screams of the wounded, slowly dying out there of thirst and torturing wounds. Wherever there was movement a merciful shot went home, another son of Allah went to his maker.

It was there that Turkey's famous 18th Regiment was wiped out and Mustafa Kemal, who was later to become Dictator of Turkey, was disgraced by Enver Pasha.

From then onwards Gallipoli was an open graveyard. It stank. No man can recall that campaign without sickening again at the stench. Dead lay around the trenches and between the lines, friend and foe rotting in the sun. The incessant tunnelling of both sides had drawn us closer together. In some parts we were less than eighty yards from each other. That meant a never-ending watch, never to relax for a second. Sentry duty at these points was a ghastly nerve strain, a perpetual agony with every faculty on edge, so that men had to be relieved at very short intervals.

AND as the summer advanced the conditions grew worse and worse. Dysentery took a very heavy toll. Water was scarce and strictly rationed. There were increasing cases of jaundice. There were septic sores, unclean ulcers, rat bites that nothing seemed to heal, and lice beyond all human control. The trenches were always full of black flies.

We cursed the sun and the flies and the lice as enemies more terrible than the Turks.

Despite all our energetic efforts at keeping our habitations in the ground clean, we could do nothing against those rotting bodies out there, could do nothing to combat the insanitary conditions under which the Turks and their Arab irregulars lived.



IS THERE A HEAD SHOWING OVER THERE?

Here is a scene in a front-line trench in August 1915, manned by men of the Royal Berkshire Regiment. All that shows above the parapet is the top of the periscope through which a man is watching the enemy trenches. His loaded rifle with bayonet fixed stands beside him, at the entrance to the dug-out. The trench is well revetted, partly with wire netting and partly with wattle.

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SECTION XII

The Western Front Summer, 1915

May 9 — August 13, 1915

DURING the spring and summer of 1915 the British fighting was mainly concentrated in Flanders and Northern France. The actions attempted met with no permanent success, though they showed the invincible gallantry of British arms. ¶ Major Lushington, who, under the pseudonym "Mark Severn," wrote the brilliant war book "The Gambardier," tells a story of the gunners at the battle at Festubert and the disastrous shortage of shells, and William Linton Andrews of the infantry in attack there. ¶ The actions at Hooge, trench life, and the first use of liquid fire are told by three war-time authors. ¶ This section also includes two stories from the other side: one by Herr Von Rintelen, a famous German agent, of his capture by the British, and a second describing a remarkable escape from Donington Hall.

*77 May 9, 1915

A GUNNER at FESTUBERT

When We Were Short of Shells

by Major Franklin Lushington ('Mark Severn')

ON May 9 my Brigade took part in the battle at Festubert. The night before Alington and Shadbolt [fellow subalterns] slept lightly and uneasily in a farm cart. About an hour before dawn they rose in the darkness and crept shivering on to their guns. Except for an occasional rifle shot, the front was deathly quiet, and one could plainly hear men stumbling about and shouting in the neighbouring fields as, by the fitful lantern-light, they prepared their monstrous gods for the coming day.

Suddenly there was a deafening crack, followed by four stabbing flashes of flame. The 18-pounder battery behind had opened fire. As if this were the signal, every battery on the front crashed into a thunderous accompaniment, and the whole earth seemed to shake to the blasting roar of their guns. Shadbolt's first battle had begun. In the half light behind the gun he watched the mechanical feeding of an insatiable monster by its statuesque slaves, their grey, unshaven faces contorted by the flickering gun-fire into something evil and unearthly. This diabolic illusion was increased by their continual ramming and stoking, their tireless activity, and their silence.

Across the orchard the men on Alington's gun were working with the same precise and deadly concentration. Through the trees he could see his friend's long legs moving restlessly to and fro, as he checked the sights and ammunition, and superintended the working of his detachment.

The whole of that bright May day this devil's work went on, and in the evening its first results appeared in the shape of a few shaken-looking prisoners in muddy field grey, who crept in listless batches down the road behind the battery positions. The gunners crowded round them demanding "Souvenir," the only word common to all the nations at war. Each man returned with a helmet, the old German "pickelhaube," a set of buttons, a belt, or a haversack. One wondered if those poor prisoners would retain even their clothes by the time they arrived in rear.

The next day Shadbolt was sent forward to observe from a captured German trench. Taking with him his batman, Gunner Langmead, and two signallers, he threaded his way through a maze of battered trenches.

Sandbags and dead bodies lay jumbled there in wild confusion, as if some petulant giant, growing tired of play, had thrown down his broken toys in heaps. Finally they arrived in a little trench so choked with dead and so void of all semblance of a parapet, that it had been left unoccupied by our troops.

Sandbagging up one corner of this, Shadbolt and the signallers settled down

FESTUBERT WAS THEIR LAST FIGHT

Here is one of the batches of German prisoners described by Major Lushington in this page as "creeping listlessly" down the road behind the batteries. These men were captured by the 2nd Scots Guards and, as the photograph shows, they are hardly in a state to give much trouble to their escort. They are on their way to the base where, in a prisoners' "cage," an enclosure surrounded by a barbed wire fence, they must await trans-shipment to a British prison camp.

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to the day's work, whilst the cherubic-faced batman set off on the inevitable souvenir hunt. He had just left when the enemy began a tremendous bombardment, the exact centre of which seemed to be situated on their isolated and defenceless little post. Shells were bursting with thundering concussions in front and in rear, to the right and to the left and in the air above, when the major rang up from the battery to inquire what was happening and whether a counter-attack was impending. These were points which Shadbolt would gladly have been clear about himself, as he knew that between him and the enemy, a few hundred yards away, there was only one tired company of Coldstream Guards in a hastily thrown up trench. " You must go and find the infantry O.C., ask what's happening and what we can do to help." This meant a hundred and fifty yards mostly over the open. At school Shadbolt had won a cup for the quarter-mile, but he beat his own record that day.

ARRIVING panting and splashed with mud, he was informed by a bored sentry that the officers were having lunch about two bays down the trench, and as he rounded the next traverse he caught the words " Fruit salad, m'lord." Apparently quite unmoved by the activities of the enemy, they asked him to lunch, and suggested that, when things had quieted down, he should shoot up a machine-gun which was worrying them. Declining the friendly invitation, he only stayed to locate the offending machine-gun, and then bolted back to reassure the major.

A quarter of an hour later when the bombardment had died down to scattered shelling, in staggered Master Langmead, absolutely covered with pickelhaubes, sword-bayonets, and other trophies of war. " Please, sir, I'm sorry I've been away so long, but I've brought you this ring which I got orf a dead orficer's finger."

In the evening, after Shadbolt had dealt faithfully with the machine-gun, the enemy put down another fierce " hate." The little party, laden with telephones, reels of wire, rifles, kit, spare food, and Langmead's souvenirs, sallied out as soon as it seemed safe, and made a dive for the trench behind. This was packed with Canadians waiting, with bayonets fixed and set faces, to make another attack. There followed another sprint to a third trench and then a fourth. Suddenly the air was torn with the crackling rattle of musketry and machine-guns. Up got the Canadians in front, and in the far distance Shadbolt thought he saw grey forms hurrying eastwards.

BORNE down with heat and the weight of the telephone reels, there was still trench after trench to be passed, all crowded with anxious, waiting men from whom the words " Canadians attacking, Germans running," brought a smile of relief and a muttered " Thank Gawd, sir, for that." And so wearily home, meeting one of the fresh Highland battalions from England marching up to relieve the Coldstreams. They looked grim and determined enough. Shadbolt had known one of the company commanders at home and shouted him a cheery greeting, but he only stared blankly and made no reply.

Early in June the battery moved to Annequin, where a whole month was spent without firing a round. Every effort had been made by those at home



REMINDERS OF FESTUBERT'S FATEFUL DAYS

The name of Festubert gained a ghastly fame in the winter of 1914 and the spring of 1915, for several engagements took place there. Subsidiary actions took place in November and December 1914, and in January 1915, but the village became widely known during the battle at Festubert in May, described in this chapter. These two photographs show reminders of those terrible days. Top is the entrance to the church which has replaced the original 13th-century building, and below is a garden where corrugated iron and wooden supports for the German barbed wire have been adapted to the needs of peace.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

to supply the much-needed ammunition for Neuve Chapelle and Festubert. At the last-named battle some of the 6-in. shells were stencilled April 24, showing that no time was wasted between the factory and the gun. Actually, since the beginning of the war about 49,000 rounds had been shipped to France by this date. This compares with 38,000 a month for the first six months of 1916, 290,000 a month during the battle of the Somme, 840,000 a month throughout 1917, and over a million a month in 1918.

THE effect of these early battles was to shoot away all the available supply, and for some months after Festubert all siege batteries were reduced to a maximum of twelve rounds a day. At that time the only ammunition supplied to these batteries was some 6-in. gun shell from Gibraltar, which had been condemned as unserviceable in the piping times of peace. To ensure safety these were fired by means of a specially long lanyard, all the gun's crew being ordered out of the gun-pit except the hero who pulled the string. A premature occurred in a neighbouring battery, which blew the whole of the front of the barrel off. But owing to the care that was taken when firing these condemned shells, no casualties occurred. Whether they caused any casualties amongst the enemy is also an open question.

A few 6-in. shrapnel were also issued, but it was found quite impossible to persuade them to burst at the right spot in the path of their trajectory. This is, of course, just before they reach the ground so that the shrapnel bullets spray out like the drops from a watering-can. Fired from the howitzers they usually burst about a quarter of a mile up in the air, or on the ground, or quite frequently not at all.

Time hung very heavily for officers and men alike. Books and newspapers were in great demand, and the arrival of the mail from home was the outstanding event of the day. The captain sketched, the subalterns loafed and read, and the gunners played "house" all day. This is a gambling card game, much beloved by the troops, and consists in betting on the face value of the cards dealt out to each player. Part of a second pack is then dealt, the dealer in a sing-song voice calling out the values, most of which have special names. On a hot afternoon, half asleep under a gun tarpaulin, Shadbolt and Alington listened to the droning, unceasing chant: "Clicketty Click, Number Seven, Kelly's Eye, Legs Eleven, Number Nine, Top o' the House," while in the distance a regular whine and bang indicated that the enemy gunners were getting rid of their daily allotment. Near by, a battery of French 75's, like irritated terriers, would occasionally reply with a spurt of angry yapping, but elsewhere from the British positions all was quiet.

SHADBOLT visited the French battery once or twice, and was much impressed by their methods. He never found more than four men in the battery position, one to each gun, though there must have been others hidden away somewhere. On his first visit he was accosted by a friendly looking tramp in odds and ends of soiled uniform, who appeared to be the only inhabitant. This individual turned out to be a

LATE EDITIONS FOR THE TROOPS

Only through the letters that came from home and the newspapers that spasmodically reached them did the troops with the British Expeditionary Force glean tidings of the progress of the war outside their own field of action "somewhere in France." In and near the fighting areas newspapers were rare indeed, as is suggested by the photograph in page 220. Behind the lines, however, newspapers were more plentiful, though no less in demand. Here are men of the A.S.C. gathered in a base town street reading the latest news from England—the good and ill, and the way of things.





ALL QUIET AFTER THE STORM OF BATTLE

Much of the fierce fighting described in this chapter took place around the spot shown in the photograph. It is the heavily sandbagged trench line near Cuinchy, at the point known as the" Brickstacks," an outlying portion of the La Bassée brickfields. On the left is " Machine-Gun House," a good observation post, with cellars that made excellent dug-outs.

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sergeant and, finding that the visitor understood French and was also a gunner, was only too delighted to show him round and to describe the inner workings. After an exhaustive inspection of the whole battery he inquired whether " Monsieur le Capitaine " would like to fire a round at the " sale Boche." Shadbolt said he would. Without further ceremony the Frenchman pushed a round into the bore and told him to shoot.

THEREUPON he banged into the blue, shook hands with his gallant ally and departed, still without seeing another soul. Shadbolt could not help contrasting this with the methods employed in his own battery, where the procedure of firing involved a solemn ritual including an officer and six acolytes per gun, and attendant high priests standing round with range tables and telephones.

The O.P. for the Annequin position was situated in the wing of a large distillery in the support line. At various times this had been occupied as an O.P. by every battery in the British Army as well as by the French and Germans in 1914. In the vast cellar lived the signallers and telephone exchanges of no less than five batteries. They had made themselves comfortable with lanterns and stoves, broken armchairs, old French beds, and a piano. The first night that Shadbolt arrived the Germans were putting up their usual evening " hate " on the village behind.

The noise of bursting enemy shells was loud and continuous, but the only retaliation from the British lines was " Hold your hand out, you naughty boy," played, to an accompaniment of much laughter and shouting, on the cellar piano. He decided to sleep upstairs, where the advantages of a large double-bed and plenty of fresh air seemed to outweigh the possible disadvantages of a wandering whizz-bang or a spent rifle bullet. One wall of his bedroom had been blown away and he looked straight down a long vista of ruined rooms on which the flarelights from the trenches cast flickering, fantastic shadows. The ghosts of all the nations, who had fought and died in this place, crept and peered and prowled. Every so often a brick would fall or a bomb go off, and they would stop and listen—Shadbolt was connected by a speaking-tube to the cellar, but it seemed hardly in keeping with his dignity as an officer to order Gunner Langmead to keep him company.

Another O.P. was in a ruined house in Cuinchy, just off the La Bassée road. One sultry Sunday afternoon when all else was " quiet on the Western Front " the enemy began methodically to shell the building with 5·9's. Shadbolt and a subaltern from another battery who were both on duty thought it best to retire to a small sandbag dug-out at the back. They stood at the entrance to the dug-out, which was splinter-proof and no more, and watched the performance with professional interest. In the stillness one could hear the German howitzer fire, followed by the long-drawn whine of the approaching shell, and the shattering burst as it landed on a house or a garden wall. They counted the overs and shorts and the rights and lefts, and were presently joined by Saunders from Shadbolt's battery, who had come up to repair the cut telephone wire.

Suddenly one shell seemed to be coming much closer, and Shadbolt felt a sharp pain in his leg as he dived with the others for the mouth of the dug-out. The blast of the explosion knocked him flat, and when he staggered to his feet he found both the others, covered with mud and blood, moaning on the ground.

BINDING them up as well as he could, he then discovered that a small splinter had severed a muscle in his thigh, that the telephone wires were again cut, and that the enemy had gone to gun-fire, that is, having found the range slowly and methodically with one gun, he was now firing the whole battery as hard and as fast as he could.

It seemed as if the rocking dug-out would certainly collapse on them with the mere force of the explosions. Saunders was unconscious, but the other subaltern, who was badly hit, kept crying for help in a piteous way. There was nothing to be done but wait. After what seemed to be an eternity, but was in reality not more than ten or fifteen minutes, a figure appeared at the doorway and a quiet voice said : " Are any of you fellows alive ? " It was the colonel. It appeared that a hysterical signaller had run the whole way down to the battery and reported that three officers had been killed and the O.P. destroyed. Whereupon the colonel, who happened to be in the position, had calmly walked up through the shelling to see for himself, while an ambulance was sent for by telephone.



IN THE SPIRIT OF THEIR FOREFATHERS

These men of the Honourable Artillery Company are in a trench at St. Eloi in April 1915, and in an interval of fighting are brewing some welcome tea in a mess-tin. In June they were at Hooge as related in pages 426-27. The H.A.C., whose charter dates back to 1537, justified its name to the full in the world war. Over 12,000 men served in it, and over 4,000 were granted commissions. The orders and decorations gained totalled 225, including two V.Cs

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WHEN 'SPIT AND POLISH' WAS FORGOTTEN

Sandbags and boxes that have held bombs make up the parapet of the trench in which a member of the garrison is having a well-earned rest during a quiet period. The trench is in the Bois Grenier sector, which as early as March 1915 was the scene of hot fighting and over which the tide of battle ebbed and flowed until 1918.

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THE GREAT MEN OF THE ARMIES CONFER

Though Sir John French and General Joffre had their differences at times, in the end they entertained a high respect for each other's qualities. Above they are seen at one of their meetings walking with a number of other officers. The British Commander-in-Chief is on the left and General Joffre is next to him. Behind them in the centre is the tall figure of Sir Henry Wilson, chief liaison officer with the French high command.



A BILLET GOES UP IN SMOKE

During the bright summer months of 1915 the ruined village of Hooge, which lay on the Menin Road, was the scene of desperate fighting, for near that place there were positions which were vital to those who held them. Attacks and counter-attacks were carried out again and again, leaving behind a trail of carnage and destruction. Here is a photograph of the destruction taken in 1915 on the outskirts of Hooge, where a farmhouse, used as a billet, was struck and set ablaze by shellfire.

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SHEEP to the SLAUGHTER: Failure at Festubert

by W. Linton Andrews

MR. LINTON ANDREWS (now Editor of "The Leeds Mercury"), whose fine description of Neuve Chapelle appears in Chapter 58, was present also at the battle at Festubert. He introduces his terrible story by a charming description of an awakening in a French farm-yard

My heavy eyes, struggling to open, fought the fight. My spirit, travelling back by painful ways from unimaginable remoteness, stirred my body out of its inertia. A girl's face, alight with tenderness, was looking down on me. I lay beside Nick, in the bewilderment of exhaustion.

"My brave Jocks," said the girl, "rest quiet. I bring you coffee—yes?"

With a smile she vanished. It was puzzling and dreamlike. I closed my eyes, sank back for a while, then, as cramp in my limbs asserted itself, made an effort to remember things. The memory of a bad time in the trenches—much shelling, casualties, legs and arms blown off, long anxiety as our reliefs came up, an interminable march, the discovery of the cart, the climb into its shelter from the wind.

"Nick," I called gently. The lad did not move. The girl came back with bowls of coffee, bread, and fried ham. She perched herself on the backboard, looking down on us maternally.

"Camarade no thirsty?" she said.

"Camarade très fatigué," I replied.

I CALLED to Nick again. He woke with a nervous start, broad awake at once.

"Mon ami, mon brave ami," I said, by way of introduction.

"Dam good breakfast," the girl pleasantly remarked to Nick, who rubbed his eyes gravely. She spoke soldiers' English, and there were inevitably swear words in it: profanation of such fresh pretty lips was inevitable. The sweet concern in her hazel eyes, the kindness in her face, were proof of a gentle nature.

"My poor boys, you fight—yes? Oh, I love the Jocks—dam nice, you Jocks. I bring more bread—yes?"

"Tell me your name," I pressed her. She told me, but I could make out only the Christian name.

"Ah, well," she said, "call me Rosalie. The Crosbies called me that." (It sounded like Crosbies.)

"Who?" said I.

"The Crosbies," she repeated in surprise. "No compris Scotch regiment, Crosbies?"

"Oh, compris!" exclaimed Nick. "The K.O.S.B.'s." That was it.

"What's this?" asked Nick, looking at our coverlet, a nice, warm carpet rug.

Rosalie laughed merrily. "I find you here at five this morning. I give you couverture."

BLESS the dear! We had fallen into good hands. A stainless sky shone festally. The warm air was good, but how utterly tired we were, our limbs racked with fatigue.

"I go now," said Rosalie. "Bring the mugs to the farm there, please, Jock."

"We'd better get up and see what's become of the old company," said Nick.

Slowly, for our Highland legs were stiff and painful, we got down out of our cart and looked around for the boys. The rest of them were wedged together in an evil-smelling huddle in a barn.

We gazed in at the men who lay still as the dead. Some rested with outflung arms, as if they had fallen in action. "Feyther's" legs lay across a sergeant's. Both snored grotesquely.

"NOT thinking of waking, Willie?" I said to a chum. He woke with eyes of terror, as if caught sleeping at his post. Then he saw who I was, and went to sleep again.

Nick and I went to the farm kitchen. Rosalie was there, helping a large, placid mother.

"Oh la la!" exclaimed the mother. "C'est triste la guerre. Many dead—yes?"

"Oui, beaucoup, Madame," I said.

And that was about all Nick and I cared to tell her.

It was pleasant, just to sit there in the warm kitchen, where the brass and pewter shone, and the dinner on the stove smelled good. Rosalie went about her tasks with good humour.

"Mademoiselle Rosalie," said I, "you have been too good to us."

"Ah, no, Jock; that is impossible," she said. "One can be too bad, but too good—ah, no!" . . . .

We were still uncertain whether we were to move that night (May 8).

A HOME VERY FAR FROM HOME

One of the few reminders of home that the fighting soldier got was when he found himself for a few brief hours in a cottage or farm-house. As Mr. Andrews says in this page, it was "pleasant to sit in the warm kitchen." But there were occasions when Madame was not there to welcome her guests, for she had fled before the invader. This photograph shows two men in a cottage at Festubert, who before being plunged into the fierce fighting find in a deserted cottage, with the knick-knacks of its former occupants still in place, what may be their last taste of home life.

L.N.A.



Little ration-bags were given us to tie on our equipment. I filled mine with figs, biscuits, chocolates and cheese. The waiting began to get on our nerves. We wanted the thing over. I put in my diary: "Shall be glad when we start. Don't like the idea of dying without ever seeing Gertie and Janet again. No philosophy can cure the yearning for one more sight of those I love. May God be very good to my darling and to my sister."

Remember this is not my own story alone; it is the story of many thousands of others. We did not go into battle like the brute beasts that perish, like sheep going to the slaughter, but in what might be our last hours thought very tenderly of those at home.

At eight o'clock came the time-honoured words, the order for which we had waited so impatiently: "By the right, quick march."

My company carried tools, the others ammunition. Many units were going up, and there was much traffic of ammunition and of guns. It was five hours before we reached our appointed position, an entrenched line where we were to await the bombardment.

WE were somewhere near Festubert. Though at Neuve Chapelle we had had a very good idea of what we were after, here, coming to what to us was a fresh bit of the line, we had only vague ideas of the battle plan.

Once the sweat of carrying our rifles, spades, picks and ammunition had dried on us, we began to feel bitterly cold, and were glad when we got an order to move into dug-outs. Six of us were put in one that was carpeted with straw. Sometimes we looked out and saw the stars shining. We listened for the noises of battle, but all was quiet except for the distant rumble of German carts on paved roads. It seemed that Jerry was bringing up rations as usual.

Chick Wallace, one of our best singers, was in our dug-out, and we got him to sing our favourite on such occasions, "There's a wee hoose." It made us think of our homes, and the old folk, and our sweethearts. It was only a music-hall song, but to us it was a hymn before battle. Chick was never to see his wee hoose again. He was blown to pieces an hour or two later.

At five o'clock a battery behind us started to hammer away, and in a moment or two there sprang up what seemed to be miles of British artillery fire. We looked out. It was a good day for the observers, the sky clean of any speck of cloud. The continuous shattering roar of our guns was varied now and then by the swish of German shells over our heads.

LET US EAT AND DRINK, FOR TOMORROW—WE FIGHT

This scene is in the reserve lines behind Festubert during the time the battle was in progress in May 1915. Officers of an infantry regiment are taking lunch in the open, and neither substantial rations nor the wherewithal to wash them down are lacking. For them this peaceful scene was soon to be but a pleasant memory of the past, for all the reserves were flung into the fighting line.

Imperial War Museum







THEY WERE PROUD SOLDIERS OF THE KING-EMPEROR

The stoical bravery of the Indian soldiers, who were the first of the Imperial troops to join the British Expeditionary Force, aroused the admiration of all who saw them in action on the Western Front, where climatic conditions and trench warfare, which were strange to them, taxed them severely. These three photographs were taken in 1915, when the men from India were in the thick of the fighting. Above, Indian artillery passing through a village on their way to a forward position; left, infantry on the march near Festubert; below, officers and men of the 1/1 Gurkhas outside their headquarters at a French farm.

Imperial War Museum



"Stretcher bearer!" The familiar cry went up, never to cease all day.

Wounded men were now walking back in our narrow trenches. English soldiers were pressing forward with ammunition. One had a football tied to his haversack.

At seven o'clock word passed along: "The German trench has been taken." We were very cheerful, everything considered. (This rumour proved to be untrue.)

PITEOUS CRIES

We waited long past the time when we expected to move. This was ominous, for it meant that we were still a long way from the German second line, whatever had happened to the first. A sergeant put his head in at the dug-out. "Get your men out quick, corporal, and move forward as fast as you can. Force your way up. We mustn't be late on any account. Do not stop for the wounded. Get on."

It took us some hours to make our way to a position a little behind the front line. We were under heavy shrapnel almost all the way. At one point we had to rush across the open under fire. While I was running, my water-bottle broke loose and I lost it, but I did not stop to pick it up.

The trenches were horribly jammed, and the cries of the wounded Seaforths and Gurkhas wanting to get past were piteous. But our orders were clear. We had to force ourselves forward. There was no stopping to exchange a friendly word with some poor cripple.

Our bombers were in front of my section. A small shell—some called it a pip-squeak, a name not very familiar to us then—banged into the middle of them. Two of my friends, Jimmy Scott and Spark, were badly hurt, and Harley slightly.

We were getting far more fire than we expected. Jerry was surprising us. We never thought we should have anything like this trouble to get to the front line. We were all wedged together in the trenches, men of different units, bombers, riflemen, runners, wounded, and dying. We were so thick at some points that if a shell came we could not crouch down.

We of the Black Watch elbowed our way ruthlessly to the front. It was madness to stay there in that jammed trench and be shelled to pieces.

When we came to the front line, or near it, there was more room, and we could lie at the bottom of the trench. Nick and I had kept together. A box of bombs had been left in our fire-bay. Nick pointed to it, laughing. I pushed it as far away from us as possible. There was nothing else to do but wait for orders.

I brought out my little note-book and scribbled a few words. This was part of my entry at 3.30 p.m.: "Under bombardment. Nerve-racking medley of roar and clatter. We are lying as low as possible. From the bottom of the trench I can see white puffs (shrapnel in the sky), also dense yellow-brown clouds where German high-explosive shells strike near our trench. Overhead aeroplanes are like filmy silver-grey moths against the glorious sky. Rushing winds accompany the whooshing and whooping and whistling of the shells, and earth continually topples over into the trenches. Have just been struck by a piece of shell—only a scratch on my right hand."

The bombardment continued for perhaps an hour. The German fire was vigorous and accurate. We were showered again and again by volcanoes of shell-torn earth. The call for stretcher-bearers never ceased.

About four o'clock we moved forward to a trench close to the firing-line, and were still vigorously shelled. There came a check. Men were bunching in front. Nick and I dropped to our knees for cover. Something struck the earthen wall hardly six inches from our faces and burst. Our faces were blackened, but we were not hurt. Nick said afterwards it was a rifle-grenade, yet a rifle-grenade bursting six inches away from our heads must have killed us. We argued about it later, but never came to a conclusion. It was one of those inexplicable escapes which came to every soldier.

We now saw why our progress had been checked. A narrow trench was crowded with dead, dying, and ammunition. Each of us had to take a box of ammunition and push on to the front trench. Here, too, we were shelled, though not as vigorously as before. Evidently Jerry knew all about our crammed communication trenches, and was sowing death where it would reap the biggest harvest.

We were still not wholly dispirited. We had still seen very little of the battle. Except for a brief dash, we had been in trenches the whole day and had not seen one German. We did not know what had happened in front of us, except that obviously the German front line had not been taken.

We sat down on the fire-bay to wait. Our platoon-officer came and sat with Nick and myself.

"It looks bad," he said. "I don't believe our shrapnel's the slightest damned use for destroying trenches."

The bombardment had slackened, and we had a peep into No Man's Land. I shall never forget the sight. This is the note I made of it at the time: "Ghastly spectacle of dead and wounded in a long line—'looking like sandbags,' one man said."

Our A Company had charged with the 4th Seaforths and lost heavily. They got ten yards from the parapet and were mown down by machine-guns that burst out simultaneously. The Indians had gone over and had suffered the same fate. There was the frightful smell of charred flesh from a casualty whose clothes had been set on fire by a shell.

A runner came along with messages. Mr. Sturrock went to report to another officer. He came back with a stoical face. "Sorry, boys," he said, "we go over next."

"Shall I tell the men?" I asked.

He replied: "No, not yet. They'll know soon enough. Just see they've got bayonets fixed ready."

Then he had another good look at No Man's Land.

THEY WERE ON THE WIRE

"Not an earthly," he said, meaning there was no chance that we could reach the German front line. It did not appear to be battered by our fire. A soldier who had fought in South Africa came to me and said: "My God! They're lying out there on the wire like our fellows at Magersfontein."

We could hear the groans and curses of the wounded, and shouted to them that we would bring them in at dusk. An officer's servant, Private Smith, sprang over the parapet and went out to his master lying wounded, and stayed with him till the dark fell, but the rest of us were forbidden to try to succour our men. It was our job to go over next, and nothing else mattered.

The order came to get ready.

"I shall never see Forthill again," said Mr. Sturrock. That was the county ground where he had played cricket.

Nick [a fellow journalist] said to me with affected self-pity: "Isn't it a shame that we're going to have a wonderful experience that we can't put into print? I could write such a grand article on how it feels to die young."

I was more practical. "Bags I that shell-pit in front where the two Seaforths are," said I.

At that moment a high officer came rushing up. He had only just been able to get through the press.

"My God!" he said. "Do you think you Terriers are going to succeed where Regulars have failed?"

"Our orders are to go over," said Mr. Sturrock quietly.

" Then for God's sake cancel them ! " said the other officer.

The word passed like a flash. There was no need to issue formal orders. We knew we were saved. Once again that day, by a million to one chance, we had been held back from death.

We now busied ourselves looking over the wounded in our trenches, and prepared to go over into No Man's Land as soon as dusk gave a chance to retrieve the poor fellows out there. Later our front quietened somewhat, but far off we could hear the artillery hammering away.

" I believe we've only done a feint," somebody said. " The big battle has been down south."

FAILURE FOLLOWS FAILURE

It was not for a long time that we learnt the truth. We *were* intended to break the enemy line. We had more guns in proportion to the front of attack than we had had at Neuve Chapelle, but the artillery work did not come up to expectations. There was not enough high-explosive shell to destroy the fortresses the German trenches had now become. Ammunition was largely defective, and our guns had deteriorated through heavy use at Ypres and Neuve Chapelle.

The first attack of the Indian Corps at 6 a.m. had been a ghastly failure. The 1st Division on their right had had no better luck.

A fresh attack was made, but was a complete failure. There was a stream in No Man's Land that was too deep to wade, and there were only a few tiny bridges over it, some of them broken, and others blocked with the bodies of those who had been killed and wounded. The German machine-gun fire that day had the easiest task to be imagined.

Months later a friend gave me a souvenir, an extract from the official dispatch on the action of the Bareilly Brigade. This said :

> All three battalions pushed in part of their remaining companies following on the leading ones, but these men were knocked over directly they crossed their parapet. Each commander came to the same conclusion, that since our artillery bombardment was so inadequate and the enemy's artillery, Maxim and rifle fire was in no way reduced, it was useless and a waste of life to throw in the few remaining men left in their hands, and, therefore, did not send their last reserve forward. This decision of theirs had my complete approval (the Brigadier's), and I decided not to send in the three companies of the 1/4 Black Watch which formed my brigade reserve, for it was evident that neither the enemy's parapet, personnel nor machine-gun had been seriously weakened or reduced by our artillery.

Before it was dark enough to go over the top to bring in wounded, my platoon was ordered to a communication trench.



TWO STURDY WATCHERS WAIT

By the spring of 1915 trench warfare had reached an advanced stage, with all the paraphernalia of sandbags, barbed wire, dug-outs, and cunningly devised machine-gun posts facing the forbidding No Man's Land. Here we see two men of the Black Watch, the famous regiment to which the writer of this chapter belonged, standing beside their machine-gun in an emplacement labelled " dangerous " as the aperture was marked by German snipers.

Imperial War Museum

By this time we were greatly disheartened. The night turned cold. We shivered in our trench. We could never lie down for more than a minute at a time, owing to the passage of the wounded. A man bandaged about the knee and arm painfully carried on his back a chum worse hit than himself.

Almost every Black Watch man passing up spread fresh news of casualties to our friends. Our company commander, Captain Boase, was among the wounded. When he got to the first-aid post he was obviously in pain. Major Rogers said : " I'll give you morphia."

The captain said : " Have you got plenty ? " Major Rogers replied : " Not too much."

" Then keep it for the others," Captain Boase said.

We caught a glimpse of Colonel Harry Walker and of the adjutant, Major Tarleton. They were brisk and energetic, and it put fresh heart into us to see them. Colonel Walker, seeing some of the youngsters who had come up in the last draft, and had not been under fire before, said to them : " Well, lads, you may have been boys yesterday ; you're men now—yes, men."

We heard glorious accounts of the work of our medical officer, Major Rogers, who never ceased for a moment to cope with his immense task.

Before dawn we moved off to the redoubts we had occupied the night before. We were disheartened at our failure to take any of the German trenches and by the gloomy reports of the losses of our battalion. These were said to run to hundreds. We had never before had so grievous a day.

. . . . . .

When we put up memorial crosses for those who had fallen in the action of May 9, there was a sergeant-major who put a white cross on the grave of his son, and a private who put a cross on the grave of his father.



THIS WAS ONCE A SHAMBLES AND A DESERT OF MUD

Early in 1915 the cross roads, seen above as they are today, were christened by the soldiers " Hell-Fire Corner," and continued to deserve that ominous name until the end of the war. They are on the Menin Road just behind the front line of the Ypres salient and were shelled with extraordinary regularity and ferocity by the Germans. In contrast to the peaceful scene at the present day, this spot was, during the battles of Ypres, a desert of mud and shell holes, and only too often a shambles as well.

Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

WITH the H.A.C. at HOOGE

Through Terror-stricken Fields

by H. S. Clapham

THE writer was a member of the Honourable Artillery Company and took part in the notable action at Hooge, near Ypres, on June 16. He was a well-known author of the war period, and no passage is worthier of Mr. Clapham's pen than his description of the mixed fighting which took place on that day when the H.A.C. so greatly distinguished themselves in a fiercely contested action



N.C.O. IN THE H.A.C.

This photograph shows Mr. Clapham as he is today, twenty-three years after the events he describes in this page. He was a Company Quartermaster-Sergeant in the H.A.C.

A WHISTLE blew. The men in the front line went over the top and we scrambled out and took their places in the front trench. In front of us was a small field, with grass knee high, split diagonally by an old footpath. On the other side of the field was a belt of trees, known as "Y" Wood, in which lay the first Hun trench. In a few minutes flags went up there, to show that it had been captured, and that the troops were going on. Another whistle, and we ourselves scrambled over the parapet and sprinted across the field. Personally I was so overweighted that I could only amble, and I remember being intensely amused at the sight of a little chap in front of me, who seemed in even worse case than myself. Without thinking much about it, I took the diagonal path, as the line of least resistance.

WHEN I dropped into the Hun trench, I found it a great place, only three feet wide and at least eight deep, and beautifully made of white sandbags, back and front. At that spot there was no sign of any damage by our shells, but a number of dead Huns lay in the bottom. There was a sniper's post just where I fell in, a comfortable little square hole, fitted with seats and shelves, bottles of beer, tinned meats, and a fine helmet hanging on a hook.

Our first duty was to change the wire, so, after annexing the helmet, I slipped off my pack and, climbing out again, started to move the wire from what was now the rear to the new front of the trench. It was rotten stuff, most of it loose coils, and the only knife-rests were not more than a couple of feet high. What there was movable of it we got across without much difficulty, and we had just finished when we were ordered to move down the trench, as our diagonal advance had brought us too far to the right. . . .

There was a hedge along the back of the trench, so I scrambled through a hole in it, piled my pack, rifle and other things, including the helmet, on the farther side, and started again on the wire. Hereabouts it was much better stuff, and it took us some time to get it across and pegged down. We had just got the last knife-rest across, when I saw a man, who was placing sandbags on the parapet from the farther side, swivel round, throw his legs into the trench, and collapse in a heap in the bottom. Several others were already lying there, and for the first time I realized that a regular hail of machine-gun bullets was sweeping over the trench. I made a dive for my pack, but, though I found that, my pet helmet had disappeared. Quite a string of wounded and masterless men had passed down the back of the hedge while I was working, and one of them must have thought it a good souvenir to take into hospital.

WE all started work at a feverish pace, digging out the trench and building up some sort of shelter in front. One chap, a very nice kid, was bowled over almost at once with a bullet in the groin, and lay in the trench kicking and shrieking while we worked.

The attacking battalions had carried several more trenches, and we were told that two at least had been held, but our own orders were to consolidate and hold on to the trench we were in at all costs. One could see very little in front. There was a wide field of grass, stretching gently upward to a low mound of earth several hundred yards away. This was the next line. Away on the right front was Bellewaarde Wood and Hooge Château, both above us, but the latter was partly hidden by the corner of "Y" Wood. . . .

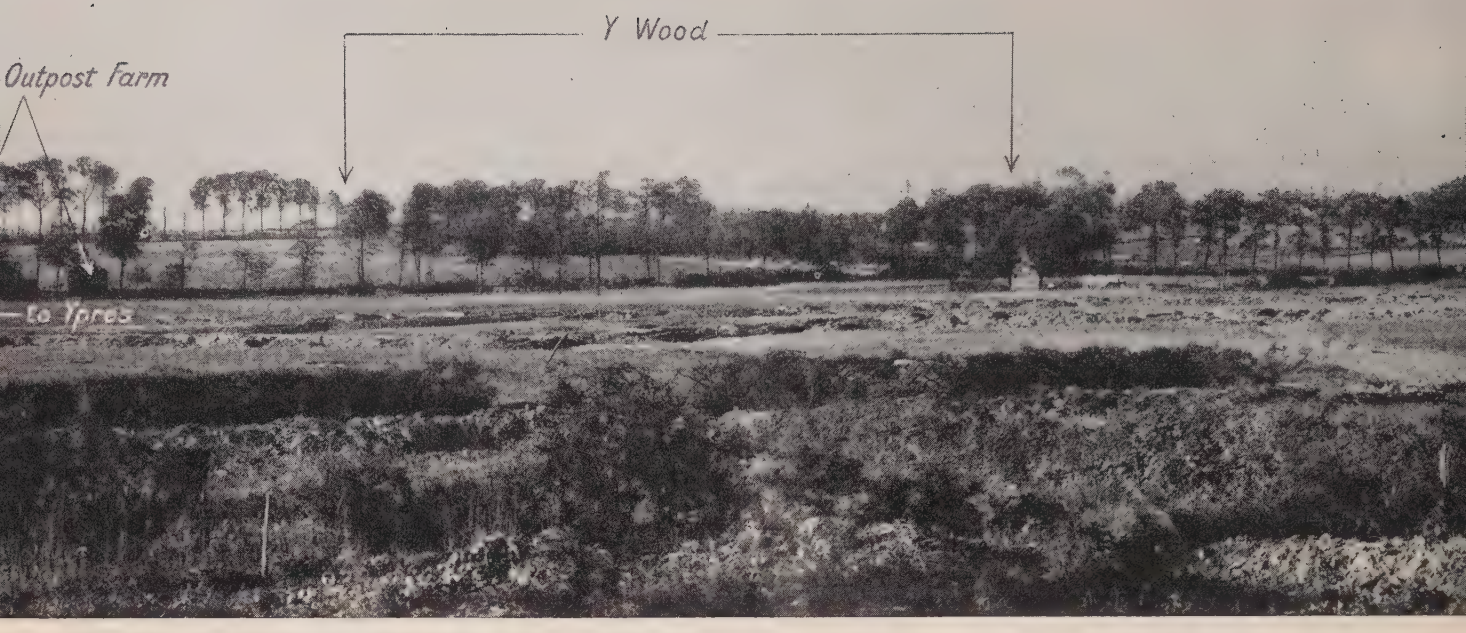
I had just filled a sandbag and placed it on the top of the parapet when I happened to glance down and saw a slight movement in the earth between my feet. I stopped and scraped away the soil with my fingers and found what seemed like palpitating flesh. It proved to be a man's cheek, and a few minutes' work uncovered his head. I poured a little water down his throat and two or three of us dug out the rest of him.

He was undamaged except for his feet and ankles, which were a mass of pulp, and he recovered consciousness as we worked. The first thing he said was in English, "What Corps are you?" He was a big man and told us that he was forty-five and had only been a soldier for a fortnight. We dragged him out and laid him under the hedge. There was nothing else we could do for him. He had another drink later, but he must have died in the course of the day. I am afraid we forgot all about him, but nothing could have lived there until evening.

THE captain was the next to go. He insisted on standing on the parados, directing operations, and got a bullet in the lungs. He could walk, and two men were detailed to take him down to the dressing station. One came back to be killed later in the day, but the other stopped a bullet en route, and followed the captain. . . .

About 5.30 a.m. the Huns started shelling and the new communication trench soon became a death trap. A constant stream of wounded who had come down another trench from the north, passed along the rear. The Huns made a target of the two traverses (unluckily including our own) from which the communication trench opened, and numbers of the wounded were caught just behind us.

The trench itself was soon choked with bodies, and it was easier and as safe to pass over the open above it. The shelling got worse as the day wore on. They plastered us with crumps, shrapnel and whizz-bangs. One of the



PANORAMA OF THE STRICKEN FIELD

This is the field of battle where the Honourable Artillery Company, who, as Mr. Clapham shows in this chapter, were new to the horrors of war, fought with the élan and tenacity of veterans. This remarkable photograph was taken shortly before the battle, looking from the south of the Menin Road, which is seen in the middle distance running from left to right towards Hooge. On it the positions of the points mentioned in this chapter are indicated. In the foreground are disused trenches defended by barbed wire.

Imperial War Museum

latter took off a sandbag from the top of the parapet and landed it on my head. It nearly broke my neck and I felt ill for some time after. It was grillingly hot, and the air was full of dust, but although one was parched up, one dared not use much of one's water. One never knew how long it must last. I came off better than most in that respect, for I had taken the precaution of carrying two water-bottles, knowing that one would never last me.

TENSE WAITING HOURS

THE worst of it was the inaction. Every minute several shells fell within a few yards and covered us with dust, and the smell of the explosives poisoned one's mouth. All one could do was to crouch against the parapet and pant for breath, expecting every moment to be one's last. And this went on for hours. One began to long for the shell which would put an end to everything, but in time one's nerves became almost numbed and one lay like a log until roused.

I think it must have been midday when something happened. An alarm was given and we manned the parapet, to see some scores of men retreating at a run from the trench in front. They ran right over us, men of half a dozen battalions, and many dropped on the way. As they passed, something was said of gas, but it appeared that nearly all the officers in the two front trenches had been killed or wounded, someone had raised an alarm of gas, and the men had panicked and run. A lot of the runaways insisted on gathering by the hedge just behind us, in spite of our warnings not to do so, and I saw at least twenty hit by shrapnel, within a few yards of us.

The brigade-major arrived, cursing, and called upon some of our men to advance and reoccupy the trench in front. He led them himself and they made a very fine dash across. I do not think more than twenty fell, and they reoccupied that trench and, I believe, the third also before the Huns realized that they were empty.

Soon the runaways began to return. They had been turned back, in some cases at the point of the revolver, but when their first panic had been overcome, they came back quite willingly, although they must have lost heavily in the process. They crowded into our trench, until there was hardly room to move a limb.

It was scorchingly hot and no one could eat, although I tried to do so. All day long—the longest day I ever spent—we were constantly covered with debris from the shell bursts. Great pieces fell all about us, and, packed like herrings, we crowded in the bottom of the trench. Hardly anything could be done for the wounded. If their wounds were slight, they generally risked a dash to the rear. Every now and then we stood to in expectation of a counter-attack, but none developed.

About 6 p.m. the worst moment of the day came. The Huns started to bombard us with a shell which was quite new to us. It sounded like a gigantic firework cracker, with two distinct explosions. These shells came over just above the parapet, in a flood, much more quickly than we could count them.

After a quarter of an hour of this sort of thing, there was a sudden crash in the trench and ten feet of the parapet, just beyond me, was blown away and everyone around blinded by the dust. With my first glance I saw what looked like half a dozen bodies, mingled with sandbags, and then I smelt gas and realized that these were gas shells.

I HAD my respirator on in a hurry, and most of our men were as quick. The others were slower, and suffered for it. One man was sick all over the sandbags, and another was coughing his heart up. We pulled four men out of the debris unharmed. One was unconscious and died of gas later. Another was hopelessly smashed. We all thought that this was the end and almost hoped for it, but luckily the gas shells stopped, and after a quarter of an hour we could take off our respirators. I started in at once to build up the parapet again, for we had been laid open to the world in front, but the gas lingered about the hole for hours, and I had to give up delving in the bottom for a time. As it was it made me feel very sick.

A counter-attack actually commenced as soon as the bombardment ceased, and we had to stand to again. My rifle had been broken in two pieces, but there were plenty of spare ones lying about now. I tried four, however, before I could get one to act at all. All were jammed, and that one was very stiff



As we leaned over the parapet, I saw the body of a Hun lying twenty yards out in front. It commenced to writhe and finally sat up. I suppose the gas had caught him. The man standing next me—a corporal in a county battalion—raised his rifle and, before I could stop him, sent a bullet into the body It was a rotten thing to see, but I suppose it was really a merciful end for the poor chap, better than his own gas at any rate.

The men in the front trenches had got it as badly as we had, and if the counter-attack was pressed it did not seem humanly possible, in the condition we were in, to offer a successful defence. One man kept worrying us all by asking what we were to do if the Huns did us in, whether surrender or run? Fortunately our own guns started and apparently caught the Huns massing. The counter-attack then crumpled up.

In the midst of it all, someone realized that the big gap in the parapet could not be manned, and four of us, including myself, were ordered to lie down behind what was left of the parados and cover the gap with our rifles. It was uncomfortable work, as the gas fumes were still very niffy, and the place was a jumble of dead bodies. We could not stand up to clear them away, and in order to get a place at all I had to lie across the body of a gigantic Hun.

As soon as things quietened down a bit, we had a chance to look round. Since the morning most of the branches of the trees in the wood had gone, and many of the trunks had become mere splintered poles. Something else had changed also, and for a time I could not make out what it was. Then it suddenly flashed across my mind that the thick hedge at the back of the trench had entirely disappeared. It was right in the path of the storm of gas shells, and they had carried it away.

We managed to get some sort of parapet erected in the end. It was more or less bullet-proof at any rate. At dusk some scores of men came back from the front line, wounded or gassed. They had to cross the open at a run or a shamble, but I did not see any hit. Then the brigade-major appeared and cheered us by promising a relief that night. It still rained shells, although not so hard as before dusk, and we did not feel capable of standing much more of it.

THE STORM DIES DOWN

As time wore on the shelling became more fitful, although it never actually ceased. It was comparatively cool again and one could drink and even eat a little. My cap had gone in the general smash and I took another which happened to fit. No relief turned up, and about midnight two volunteers were asked for, to carry to the dressing station a boy prisoner, whose leg was smashed. There was considerable competition for the job, as we were told that the men selected could go on to the rear afterwards. A Fusilier and I were the lucky ones.

We managed to manufacture a sort of splint for the boy's leg and then tied his two legs together. The Fusilier got him on his back and I took his legs. It was a rotten job, as the poor wretch started screaming and screamed until he fainted. After hoisting him out of the trench, we had to cart him across the open, which was a wilderness of shell holes. To make matters worse, I found I was as weak as a rabbit and could hardly carry myself. Just as we left the trench, a long line of dark figures passed us. They wore the kilt and we concluded that they were the expected relief.

We managed to get the boy as far as the old front line, which was full of our own wounded awaiting the doctor. There we found a hospital orderly, and he suggested we should leave our burden with him. We were thankful enough to do so, as the dressing station was a full half-mile away. After that my only thought was to get out of shell fire as quickly as possible, and I made for the road by the way we had come the night before. The field was dotted with small parties of men who had just been relieved. The ground was lower here and the stench of gas pervaded everything. Two small gas shells burst in the air above us, but I was too tired to worry about them.

The road, when I reached it, was full of troops: bonnets and caps, kilts and putties, some alone, some in twos and threes, some even in sections or small platoons. These, however, soon lost whatever formation they had in the general rush. No one wanted to stay on the Menin Road longer than need be.

At one point a tree had fallen across the road and here there was a regular jam of men struggling past. Just then a shell burst close by, and someone shouted "gas." We tried to pull on our respirators, but we were soon out of the immediate radius.

A Scot in front of me was hit by a flying piece of shell. "Gie us a hond, mate." Two of us took him by the arms and half-carried him until we reached the dressing station at Hell Fire Corner. There was a hurried "Good-bye, Jock.

Good luck," and we dashed off again down the railway line, stumbling over the sleepers as we went. Everything which added to the weight of the load was thrown away that night. Both road and line were strewn with clips of ammunition, tins of food and articles of clothing.

The Hun shells seemed to follow us. One burst on the right of the line, the next on the left. The last one I saw that day burst one hundred yards away, as we came out on the main road, south of Ypres. Hereabouts some of the houses were still standing, and in one a light was shining. There was a rush for the door, and in the ruined kitchen we found a pump which still worked. The water was of very doubtful quality, but no one had drunk for hours, and its taste was sweet enough for anyone.

When we left there it was quite light. Men were lying about, asleep all over the place. I saw an officer asleep on a pile of sacks just outside a ruined house, and close by him three men lay in a ditch. I struggled on by myself and the farther I went the clearer became the road. I passed a dozen men of an Irish unit, who had stopped to eat, and there was a small crowd at a wayside watering place. Single men of all sorts shambled along, swaying from side to side, as if drunk or half asleep. A mounted transport man stopped me and offered me a mount, but I couldn't have mounted if I had tried, and if I could I am sure I should have fallen off at once. . . .

We have lost half the battalion and nearly all our officers, including the colonel and the second-in-command. Those of us who are left look worn and old, and our nerves are in tatters. We wake up with a start, and if a shell bursts a mile away we jump out of our skins. I am inclined to curse anything and anybody. I suppose that is nerves, too.

The next day we had the brigadier round. We were all lying about half asleep at the time, and, with a consideration somewhat unusual in a brass-hat, he did not have us paraded. We were congratulated and patted on the back, and told that we had done very good work, and that next time we should have a chance on our own. What luck! He wound up by saying that troops that could stand that shelling could not be broken, and that he was afraid that we would have to go back into the trenches almost at once.

THESE chaps cannot understand that we are not soldiers and that we don't want to be soldiers, and, though we shall carry on as well as we can, we don't in the least like it, and are not in the least degree pleased at the prospect of a " brush with the Hun."

What we really like is the rest-field after the " brush " is over. One can have no idea of the blessed peace of it, after a bad time. To lie on one's back in the sun, to watch the sunset, to wallow in the dirty washing pool, to get a clean shave again, not to be tired all over, to feel against all expectation that one is still alive, to play a quiet game of poker again, or to try to do in the crown-and-anchor merchant!

WHAT A BRITISH MINE DID AT HOOGE

This huge mine crater, photographed in September 1915, was made by the explosion of a British mine in July of the same year near Hooge. Hundreds of tons of earth went up in the explosion, but within three months the work of destruction had been adapted to the purposes of defence. Around the rim of the crater sandbags have been used to make a strong defensive position, and deep down in the crater dug-outs have been excavated.

Imperial War Museum



FAMOUS ARMY LEADERS THEN AND NOW





CHETWODE

The top photograph shows Sir Philip Chetwode as he was in war-time, and the lower one as he is today. As Brigadier-General he commanded the 5th Cavalry Brigade with the original British Expeditionary Force, and proved himself a dashing cavalry leader. His distinguished war service included the command of the 2nd Cavalry Division, the command of the Desert Corps in Egypt, and the command of the 20th Corps in Palestine. After the war he was successively Deputy-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Adjutant-General, and from 1923 to 1927 Commander-in-Chief at Aldershot. His last military service was as Commander-in-Chief in India. He was promoted to the rank of Field-Marshal in 1933.

Photos, Bassano, Russell, and Lafayette





JACOB

Sir Claud Jacob, then Colonel Jacob, went to France in 1914 as General Staff Officer in the Meerut Division of the Indian Expeditionary Force, and afterwards commanded that division. He later commanded the 21st Division and the 2nd Corps. After the war he was Chief of the General Staff Indian Army, G.O.C. Northern Command, India; and Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army. Promoted Field-Marshal in 1926, he was Secretary of the Military Department of the India Office 1926-30. He is seen in the top photograph as he was in war-time, and below as he is today





IRONSIDE

General Sir Edmund Ironside was a staff officer in France early in the war, and in 1918 he was in Command of the 99th Infantry Brigade. From October 1918 until October 1919 he was Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces at Archangel, and in the autumn of 1920 he was in command of the British forces in North-West Persia. He was Quartermaster-General in India, 1933–1936, and afterwards G.O.C. Eastern Command. He was promoted General in 1935. In 1938 he became Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Gibraltar. The top photograph shows General Ironside as he was during the war, and the lower one as he is today.

MY ESCAPE from an ENGLISH PRISON CAMP

by Gunther Pluschow

ON the outbreak of the war, the writer of this chapter, Herr Plüschow, was a naval flying officer at Kiao-Chau, China. Escaping in his aeroplane during the siege of that town in November 1914, he sailed from New York in January 1915. Identified and taken prisoner at Gibraltar, he was taken to England and interned at Donington Hall. Here, as a counterpart to other stories of bold English escapes from German camps, is Herr Plüschow's own story of his remarkable escape in July 1915 to Germany



ONE OF THE FEW TO ESCAPE

Audacity, coolness and the adoption of the clever disguise shown in the photograph in the opposite page, enabled the author of this chapter to carry out one of the most remarkable of the very few escapes achieved from an English prison camp during the Great War. Herr Plüschow, who was stationed in China when hostilities broke out, is here seen as he was when serving as a Kapitänleutnant in the German naval air service.

From 'My Escape from Donington Hall,' by Gunther Plüschow, John Lane, The Bodley Head

AFTER many thrilling adventures in China and America during the first year of the war . . I attempted to get back to Germany from New York disguised as a Swiss on an Italian steamer in February 1915. But I was discovered and arrested at Gibraltar by the British authorities and eventually found myself in the German officers' prison camp at Donington Hall, near Derby.

Day and night I planned, brooded, deliberated how I could escape from this miserable imprisonment. I had to act with the greatest calm and caution if I hoped to succeed.

For hours I walked up and down in front of different parts of the entanglements, while I unostentatiously examined every wire and every stake. For hours together I lay in the grass in the vicinity of some of those spots that seemed favourable, feigning sleep. But all the time I was closely watching every object and noting the ways and habits of the different sentries. I had already fixed upon the spot where I had decided to climb the barbed wire. Now the question remained how to make headway after this obstacle had been overcome. We possessed neither a map of England nor a compass, no timetable, no means of assistance of any kind. . . . I resolved to make common cause with a naval officer, Oberleutnant Trefftz, who knew England and spoke English remarkably well.

On the 4th of July, 1915, in the morning, we reported ourselves sick. At the morning roll-call, at ten o'clock, our names were entered on the sick-list, and on its completion the orderly sergeant came to our room and found us ill in bed.

Everything was working well.

With the afternoon came the decision.

About 4 p.m. I dressed, collected all that I considered necessary for my flight, ate several substantial buttered rolls, and bade farewell to my comrades . . . A heavy storm was in progress, and rain poured in torrents from grey skies. The sentries stood wet and shivering in their sentry-boxes, and therefore nobody paid any attention when two officers decided to walk about in the park, in spite of the rain. The park contained a grotto, surrounded by shrubs, from which one could overlook its whole expanse and the barbed wire, without oneself being seen This is where Trefftz and I crept in. . . . From now onwards we were in the hands of Providence, and it was to be hoped that Fortune would not forsake us.

WE waited in breathless suspense. Minutes seemed like centuries, but slowly and surely one hour passed after another, until the turret-clock struck six in loud clear chimes. Our hearts thumped in unison. We heard the bell ring for roll-call, the command "Attention," and then the noisy closing of the day-boundary. We hardly dared to breathe, expecting at any moment to hear our names called out. It was 6.30 and nothing had happened. A weight slipped from our shoulders. Thank God, the first act was a success. For during roll-call our names had again been reported on the sick-list, and, as soon as the officers were allowed to fall out, two of our comrades raced back as swiftly as they could through the back entrance and occupied Trefftz's bed and mine. Therefore, when the sergeant arrived he was able to account satisfactorily for the two invalids. As everything was now in order, the night-boundary was closed, as every night, and even the sentries withdrawn from the day-boundary. Thus we were left to our own devices. The exceptionally heavy rain proved a boon to us, for the English soldiers generally indulged in all kinds of frolic in the evenings, and we might have easily been discovered.

At 10.30 p.m. our excitement came to a head. We had to pass our second test. We clearly heard the signal "Stand to," and from the open window of my former room "The Watch on the Rhine" rang out sonorously. It was the concerted signal that all were on the alert.

THE orderly officer, accompanied by a sergeant, walked through all the rooms and satisfied himself that no one was missing. By observations carried on for weeks I had made sure that the orderly officers always chose the same route in order to return to their quarters, after their rounds, by the shortest way. So it was tonight. The round began with the room from which Trefftz was missing. Of course his bed was already occupied by someone.

"All present?"

"Yes, sir!"

"All right! Good-night, gentlemen."

And so forth. As soon as the orderly officer had turned the corner, two other comrades ran in the opposite direction and into my room, so that here also all could be reported "present."

It is difficult to conceive our nervous tension while this was in progress.

We followed all the proceedings in our minds, and when suddenly silence supervened for an unconscionably lengthy period we feared the worst. With ice-cold hands, ears on the alert for the slightest sound, we lay, hardly daring to breathe.

At last, at 11 p.m., a lusty cheer broke the stillness. It was our concerted signal that all was clear!

The moment for action had arrived. I crept softly as a cat from my hiding-

place, through the park up to the barbed-wire fence, to convince myself that no sentries were about. When I saw that everything was in order and had found the exact spot where we wanted to climb over, I crawled back again to fetch Trefftz. Thereupon we returned by the same way.

When we reached the fence, I gave Trefftz my final instructions and handed him my small bundle. I was the first to climb over the fence, which was about nine feet high, and every eight inches the wire was covered with long spikes.

TORTUOUS EXIT

WIRES charged with electricity were placed two and a half feet from the ground. A mere touch would have sufficed to set in motion a system of bells that would, of course, have given the alarm to the whole camp. We wore leather leggings as protection against the spikes; round our knees we had wound puttees, and we wore leather gloves. . . .

I easily swung myself over the first fence. Trefftz handed over our two bundles and followed me with equal ease. Next we were confronted by a wire obstacle, three feet high by thirty feet wide, contrived according to the latest and most cunning devices. We ran over it like cats. After this we again came to a high barbed-wire hedge, built on exactly the same lines as the first and also electrically charged. We managed this, too, except that I tore a piece out of the seat of my trousers, which I had to retrieve, in order to put it in again later.

But, thank God, we were over the boundary!

Trefftz and I clasped hands and looked at each other in silence.

BUT now the chief difficulty began. We opened our bundles, took out civilian grey mackintoshes, and walked down the road in high spirits as if we were coming from a late entertainment . . .

Suddenly, just as we were turning into the village, an English soldier came walking towards us. Trefftz embraced me, drew me towards him, and we behaved like a rollicking pair of lovebirds. The Englishman surveyed us enviously, and went on his way, clicking his tongue. Only then, something in the stocky, undersized figure made me realize that it was the sergeant-major of our camp! We stepped out briskly . . . but we were at once confronted with a critical proposition. The highway branched off in three directions, and it was impossible to get any farther without knowledge of the road. At last, in spite of the darkness, we discovered a sign-post . . . and when Trefftz had climbed it, he was able to feel with his fingers the word "Derby" traced on it in raised letters.

We now fell into a quick step and, taking our bearings by the Polar star, swung along vigorously. Gradually dawn came. About four in the morning, when we arrived within sight of the first houses of Derby's suburbs, the sun rose in majestic splendour, like a crimson ball on the horizon.

We now crept into a small garden and made an elaborate toilet. A clothes brush performed miracles, and a needle repaired the damage done to my trousers. The lack of shaving soap was remedied by spittle, after which our poor faces were subjected to the ministrations of a Gillette razor. We each sported our solitary collar and tie, leaving the brush as well as other unnecessary impedimenta behind us. We entered Derby looking veritable "knuts."

OUR luck endured, and not only did we soon find the station, where we separated unobtrusively, but we also learned that the next train for London was leaving in a quarter of an hour. I took a third-class return ticket to Leicester and, armed with a fat newspaper, boarded the train. At Leicester I got out and took a ticket to London. . . . About noon the train reached London.

When I passed the ticket collector I must admit that I did not feel quite comfortable, and that my hand shook a little. But nothing happened, and after a few minutes I was swallowed up in the vortex of the capital.

At seven o'clock in the evening I stood weary and downcast on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral, waiting for Trefftz. I waited until nine, but no Trefftz appeared.

Convinced that Trefftz had already managed his escape on a friendly steamer, I dragged myself, totally exhausted, to Hyde Park, which, to my further discomfiture, I found closed. What should I do now? Where should I sleep?

I turned into an aristocratic lane where beautiful mansions were surrounded by carefully tended gardens. I was hardly able to stand on my feet, and at the first favourable moment I jumped with quick decision over one of the garden fences and hid myself in a thick box hedge, only a foot away from the pavement.

After I had lain for about an hour in my refuge, the French window of the house, leading to a beautiful veranda, opened, and several ladies and gentlemen in evening dress came out to enjoy the coolness of the night. I could see them and hear every word. Soon the sounds of a piano mingled with those of a splendid soprano voice, and the most wonderful songs of Schubert overwhelmed my soul with longing.

At last total exhaustion prevailed, and I slept heavily, seeing in my mind the most beautiful pictures of the future.

NEXT morning I was awakened by the regular tread of a policeman who marched up and down the street, quite close to where I lay, with the bright, warm rays of the sun shining down upon me.

So after all I had overslept—it behoved me to be careful. The policeman ambled idiotically up and down without dreaming of departure. At last fortune favoured me. An enchanting little lady's maid opened the door, and hey presto! the policeman was at her side, playfully conversing with the pretty dear. Without being seen by either, with a

OFFICER UNRECOGNIZABLE

The success of Gunther Plüschow's remarkable escape was due largely to his effective disguise. With the skill of a born actor he suited his mien to his clothes, and as he is seen here it is hardly to be wondered that no one detected in the typical dock labourer a dapper German airman. This photo, like that in page 430, is from his book "My Escape from Donington Hall."



quick motion I vaulted over the fence into the street. It was already six o'clock and Hyde Park was just being opened. As the Underground was not yet running, I went into the Park and dropped full length on a bench near to other vagabonds who had made themselves comfortable there. I then pulled my hat over my face and slept profoundly until nine o'clock.

With fresh strength and courage I entered the Underground and was carried to the harbour area.

In the Strand, huge, yellow posters attracted my attention, and who can describe my astonishment when I read on them, printed in big, fat letters, that :

(1) Mr. Trefftz had been recaptured the evening before ;

(2) Mr. Plüschow was still at large ; but that

(3) The police were already on his track.

The first and third items were news, but I knew all about the second. I promptly bought a newspaper, went into a tea-shop, where I read with great interest the notice [*see* illustration].

Poor Trefftz ! So they had got him I was clear in my mind as to what I was going to do, and the warrant gave me some valuable points. First, I had to get rid of my mackintosh. I therefore went to Blackfriars Station and left my overcoat in the cloakroom. As I handed the garment over the clerk suddenly asked me : " What is your name, sir ? "

THIS question absolutely bowled me over, as I was quite unprepared for it. With shaking knees I asked :

" Meinen ? " (mine), answering in German as I naturally presumed that the man had guessed my identity.

" Oh, I see, Mr. Mine—M-i-n-e," and he handed me a receipt in the name of Mr. Mine. It was a miracle that this official had not noticed my terror, and I felt particularly uncomfortable when I had to pass the two policemen who stood on guard at the station and who scrutinized me sharply.

I now sought a quiet, solitary spot. My beautiful soft hat fell accidentally into the river from London Bridge ; collar and tie followed suit from another spot ; a beautiful gilt stud held my green shirt together. After that a mixture of vaseline, boot-black and coal dust turned my blond hair black and greasy ; my hands soon looked as if they had never made acquaintance with water ; and at last I wallowed in a coal heap until I had turned into a perfect prototype of the dock labourer on strike —George Mine.

In this guise it was quite impossible to suspect me of being an officer, and



EXTRA LATE WAR EDITION

HUNT FOR ESCAPED GERMAN.

HIGH-PITCHED VOICE AS A CLUE.

Scotland Yard last night issued the following amended description of Gunther Plueschow, one of the two German prisoners who escaped from Donington Hall, Leicestershire, on Monday :-

Height, 5ft. 5½in.; weight, 135lb.; complexion, fair; hair, blonde; eyes, blue; and tattoo marks, Chinese dragon on left arm.

As already stated in "The Daily Chronicle," Plueschow's companion, Treppitz, was recaptured on Monday evening at Millwall Docks. Both men are naval officers. An earlier description stated that Plueschow is 29 years old. His voice is high-pitched.

He is particularly smart and dapper in appearance, has very good teeth, which he shows somewhat prominently when talking or smiling; is "very English in manner," and knows this country well. He also knows Japan well. He is quick and alert, both mentally and physically, and speaks French and English fluently and accurately. He was dressed in a grey lounge suit or grey and yellow mixture suit.

London Prisoner Recaptured.

August Arndt, who escaped from internment at the Alexandra Palace, North London, on Sunday, has been recaptured.

HUE AND CRY FOR PLÜSCHOW

This notice appeared in the "Daily Chronicle" when the police were hunting for Plüschow after his escape. In it he is described as being "particularly smart and dapper," which, as the photograph in the previous page shows, he certainly was not at that time

" smart and dapper " were the last words anyone could have possibly applied to me.

For days I loafed about London, my cap set jauntily at the back of my head, my jacket open, showing my blue sweater and its one ornament, the gilt stud, hands in pocket, whistling and spitting, as is the custom of sailors in ports all the world over.

ON the second morning I had colossal luck ! I sat on the top of a bus, and behind me two business men were engaged in animated conversation. Suddenly I caught the words, " Dutch steamer—departure—Tilbury." . . . . These careless gentlemen were recounting nothing less than the momentous news of the sailing, each morning at seven, of a fast Dutch steamer for Flushing, which cast anchor off Tilbury Docks every afternoon.

In the twinkling of an eye I was off the bus. I rushed off to Blackfriars Station, and an hour later was at Tilbury. I went down to the riverside, threw myself on the grass and, feigning sleep, kept a lynx-eyed watch.

Ship after ship went by and my expectations rose every minute. At last, at 4 p.m., with proud bearing, the fast Dutch steamer dropped anchor and made fast to a buoy just in front of me. My happiness and my joy were indescribable when I read the ship's name in white shining letters on the bow : MECKLENBURG.

There could be no better omen for me, since I am a native of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. I crossed over to Gravesend on a ferry-boat, and from there unobtrusively watched the steamer. . . .

This was my plan : to swim to the buoy during the night, climb the hawser, creep on deck and reach Holland as a stowaway.

I soon found the basis for my operations.

AFTER I had ascertained that nobody was paying any attention to me, I climbed over a pile of wood and rubbish and concealed myself under some planks, where I discovered several bundles of hay. These afforded me a warm resting-place, of which I made use on that and the following nights.

About midnight I left my refuge. . . .

However, I perceived with dismay that two barges which, in daytime, had been nearly submerged, lay high and dry. Luckily, at the stern, a little dinghy rode on the water.

With prompt resolution I wanted to rush into the boat, but before I knew where I was I felt the ground slipping from under my feet and I sank to the hips into a squashy, slimy, stinking mass. I threw my arms about and was just able to reach the plank, which ran from the shore to the sailing-boat, with my left hand.

It took all my strength to get free of the slime which had nearly proved my undoing, and I was completely exhausted when I at last dragged myself back to my bed of hay.

When the sun rose on the third morning of my escape, I had already returned to a bench in Gravesend Park, and was watching the Mecklenburg as she slipped her moorings at 7 a.m. and made for the open sea.

. . . . . .

The next day I walked up to London on foot from Gravesend, and returned by the other side of the Thames to Tilbury. All this, in order to find a boat that I could purloin unnoticed . . .



STRANGE SCENES IN A STATELY HOME OF ENGLAND

Donington Hall, near Derby, once the ancestral home of the Hastings family, was the prison camp for German naval and military officers during the World War. The photograph above shows the rather gloomy building, the great advantage of which was that its distance from the sea made escape difficult. The huts on the right are war-time structures. Below is the room occupied by Captain Maerker, the Captain of the Gneisenau, sunk in the battle of the Falkland Islands. Beside him is a silver model of his ship (an illustration of the actual ship and its sinking is seen in page 253). Against the apparent luxury of the room may be set the fact that horse-flesh figured largely in the rather meagre dietary.

Photos, Donald McLeish



Several lay there, as if waiting for me; but they were only too well guarded. I gave it up in despair.

That evening I went to a music-hall, with the firm intention of blowing my last pound, and then caught the last train to Tilbury.

After I had passed the first fishermen's huts of Gravesend, I found a small scull. I took it with me. In mid-stream, just near the landing-place of the fishing-vessels, a little dinghy bobbed on the water. Not more than twenty feet away sat their owners on a bench, so absorbed in tender flirtation with their fair ones that the good sea-folk took no heed of my appearance on the scene.

It was risky, but "Nothing venture, nothing have," I muttered to myself. And, thanks to my acquired proficiency, I crept soundlessly into the boat—one sharp cut, and the tiny nutshell softly glided alongside a fishing-boat, on whose quarter-deck a woman was lulling her baby to sleep.

A DANGEROUS MOMENT

As there were no rowlocks in the boat, I sat aft, and pushed off with all my strength from the shore. I had, however, hardly covered one-third of the distance, when the ebbtide caught me in its whirl, spun my boat round like a top and paralysed all my efforts at steering. The time had come to show my sailor's efficiency. With an iron grip I recovered control of the boat, and, floating with the tide, I steered a downstream course.

An imposing military pontoon-bridge, stretching across the river and guarded by soldiers, came across my way. Summoning cool resolution and sharp attention to my aid, looking straight ahead and only intent on my scull, I disregarded the sentry's challenge and shot through between the two pontoons. A few seconds after the boat sustained a heavy shock, and I floundered on to the anchor-cable of a mighty coal-tender. With lightning speed I flung my painter round it, and this just in time, for the boat nearly capsized. But I was safe. . .

My steamer lay to the starboard. I wanted to bide my time until the flow of the tide made it possible for me to get across. . . .

At last the sun rose, and still the water ran out so strongly that it was impossible to carry out my flight just then. But at last, happy in the possession of the long-desired boat, I slid downstream and, after an hour, pulled up at a crumbling old bridge on the right bank of the Thames. I pushed my boat under it, took both sculls with me as a precautionary measure, and hid them in the long grass. Then I lay down close to them, and at 8 o'clock I saw my steamer, the Mecklenburg, vanishing proudly before my eyes.

My patience had still to undergo a severe test. I remained lying in the grass for the next sixteen hours, until, at eight o'clock that night, the hour of my deliverance struck.

I again entered my boat. Cautiously I allowed myself to be driven upstream by the incoming tide, and fastened my boat to the same coal-tender near which I had been stranded the night before. Athwart to me lay the Princess Juliana moored to her buoy . . .

At midnight all was still around me, and when at one o'clock the boat was quietly bobbing on the flow, I cast off, sat up in my boat, and rowed, with as much self-possession as if I had been one of a Sunday party in Kiel Harbour, to the steamer.

Unnoticed, I reached the buoy. The black hull of my steamer towered high above me. A strong pull—and I was atop the buoy. I now bade farewell to my faithful swan with a sound kick, which set it off downstream with the start of the ebb. During the next few minutes I lay as silent as a mouse. Then I climbed with iron composure—and this time like a cat—the mighty steel cable to the hawse. Cautiously I leaned over the rail and spied about. The forecastle was empty.

I JERKED myself upwards and stood on the deck. I now crept along the deck to the capstan and hid in the oil save-all beneath the windlass.

As all remained quiet, and not a soul hove in sight, I climbed out of my nook, took off my boots, and stowed them away under a stack of timber in a corner of the fore-deck. I now proceeded to investigate in my stockinged feet.

When I looked down from a corner astern the fore-deck to the cargo-deck I staggered back suddenly. Breathlessly, but without turning a hair, I remained leaning against the ventilator. Below, on the cargo-deck, stood two sentries, who were staring fixedly upwards.

After I had remained for over half an hour in this cramped position, and my knees were beginning to knock under, there tripped two stewardesses from the middle-deck. They were apparently coming off night duty. My two sentries immediately seized the golden moment and became so absorbed in their conversation that they no longer paid any attention to what was going on around them.

The dawn was breaking, and I had to act at once if I was not to lose all I had achieved at such a price.

I let myself down along the counter on the side of the fore-deck opposite to the two loving couples, and landed on the cargo-deck. Without pausing for a moment I stepped out gently, glided past the two sentries, reached the promenade-deck safely, and, climbing up a deck-pillar, found myself shortly afterwards on the out-board side of a life-boat.

Holding on with one hand with a grip of iron, for the Thames was lapping hungrily not twelve yards away, with my other, aided by my teeth, I tore open a few of the tapes of the boat-cover, and with a last output of strength I crept through this small gap and crouched, well hidden from curious eyes, into the interior of the boat.

FREE AT LAST!

And then, naturally, I came to the end of my endurance. The prodigious physical exertions, acute excitement, and last, but not least, my ravenous hunger, stretched me flat on the boards of the boat, and in the same moment I no longer knew what was going on around me. Shrill blasts from the siren woke me from a sleep which in its dreamlessness resembled death.

I prudently loosened the tapes of my boat-cover, and with difficulty suppressed a "Hurrah!" for the steamer was running into the harbour of Flushing. . . .

With a deep breath I stood in the middle of the boat-deck, and expected to be made a prisoner at any moment. But no one bothered about me. The crew was occupied with landing manoeuvres; the travellers with their luggage. . . .

Then I mixed with the crowd, and while the passengers were being subjected to a strict control I looked round, and near the railings discovered a door, on which stood in large letters "Exit Forbidden."

There, surely, lay the way to freedom! In the twinkling of an eye I negotiated this childishly easy obstacle, and stood without.

I was free! . . .

After I had bought a few small necessaries on the next day, I boarded a slow train for Germany, wearing workman's clothes. I was quite unable to sit still for long. Alone in my first-class compartment I was overwhelmed by the thoughts and hopes which raced through my brain. I ran about my railway carriage like a wild animal in a cage.

At last! At last! It seemed an eternity; the train passed slowly over the German frontier.



MARCHING PAST THE C.-IN-C. FOR ANOTHER TURN IN THE TRENCHES

The welfare of his soldiers was never long absent from the mind of Sir John French, and in his dispatches he paid eloquent tribute to their heroic bravery. Here he is seen making an informal inspection by the roadside of men marching up for their turn of duty in the trenches. The Commander-in-Chief is the figure on the right of the group which the last rank is passing. With him are the members of his staff.



AMID THE HORROR OF HAND-TO-HAND FIGHTING—

This most remarkable photograph, probably the only one ever taken at close quarters in the heat of battle, shows the first attack on Y Wood, seen in the panorama in pages 426–427. It was taken at about 6 a.m. on June 16, by F. A. Eyfe, a bomber of the 10th Liverpool Scottish, who went forward side by side with the H.A.C. It shows a detachment of the 1st Battalion H.A.C. taking cover—



—HE STOPPED TO TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH

—under the parapet of the German front line trench, while a shell is seen exploding in the background. The flag on the right is one of those put up to show that the trench had been captured and that the troops are going on. This photograph is reproduced by courtesy of Major Charles Reid, D.S.O., who commanded a company of the 4th Gordon Highlanders which relieved the H.A.C. on June 17.



BANJO AND CONCERTINA BAND WITH CHORUS

Here on the Western Front, amid the camp debris, the war is forgotten for the moment while a sing-song with a scratch band and vociferous chorus is held. The leader of the band is an officer of the Salvation Army, who at the moment is giving a solo on the banjo; but when the full orchestra accompanies the singing his efforts will be supplemented by a concertina and a guitar. The Salvation Army huts behind the lines were admirably run, and the men in charge of them worked with remarkable devotion.

FIRST USE of LIQUID FIRE

I Saw Men Consumed by It at Hooge

by Pte. A. P. Hatton

PRIVATE HATTON witnessed the horrible results of the first use of liquid fire by the Germans against the British troops at Hooge. He describes the fury which this barbarous method of assault excited and the bitter fighting which ensued. There is little wonder that the action resulted in small gains for the Germans

THERE were three of us in my platoon who had stuck together as pals ever since we went out to the front in March, including the affairs at Neuve Chapelle and Ypres, although we were only in reserve there, and so did not lose many men. Starting from Good Friday, we had spent three months continuously in the trenches . . . four days in and four days out at a time. That three months was a comparative picnic and we lived like lords. There was myself, Lance-Corporal C——, and young Private B—— (whom you may call for convenience "Robbie").

Lance-Corporal C—— got a weekly parcel from a young lady he was engaged to—cigarettes, soup cubes, sardines, curry powder, cakes, etc.

"Robbie" was always getting parcels—two or three a week sometimes—from his young wife, as she had a very good job in the Potteries and he married her just before he left for the front. I got nothing as I had run away from home to enlist; but my pals shared and shared alike, and we were soon as chirpy as crickets.

Not at first, though, for "Robbie" was very soft about his girl-wife, and when the first shells came over at Bailleul I noticed the poor fellow's lips twitching and his eyes drawn. When we were on sentry at night he did nothing but chatter nervously to me about his wife and her loneliness all the time.

C—— was a natural "funny dog" and a dabster on the mouth-organ; but as it was his one burning ambition to qualify for a short leave home in order to get married and get separation allowance for his lass, who was none too well off, he also seemed to shrink into himself at first, and pull away at his moustache with set face when the shells came. But they stuck it gamely, and after a month we took no more notice of the whizz-bangs—which always saluted us with a dose of "morning hate" at 5 a.m. and another dose of "evening hate" at 5 p.m.—than you would of a wasp.

For as the weeks passed, and we were left in the same spot, we dug and



BLACK PALL AND FLAMING RIBBONS

Fresh horrors were let loose when the Germans added to their arms the brutal flammenwerfer, the device which poured forth flaming liquid to bring agonizing wounds and death to those who came within its range. In this chapter Private Hatton describes the grim scenes at Hooge when the Germans used liquid fire as a preface to an attack. Later the British were obliged to follow the enemy's ignoble example and employed flame throwers also, using them for the first time at the battle of the Somme. Here is a photograph of the British device in action.

Imperial War Museum

contrived until our trenches were like well-paved streets, with secure head cover and with "dug-outs" that were comparatively underground passages for comfort and security. We were also lucky in having the German lines at least 350 yards away, so that at night time we used to go out for a stroll to stretch our legs in front of the firing-line (when not moonlight, of course), and we came to regard the bark of a shell as far worse than its bite. In fact, we often joked about them and made bets as to where they would fall, just the same as you read in war books.

THEN came reality, first near Ypres during the Spring battle, when we were shelled by monster howitzers while we were exposed in the open on the march, and limbs flew through the air with the velocity of shell fragments; and then next at Hooge.

This was easily our worst "show." We had word from the general that a great deal depended on us, and that we were to hang on like grim death. That was when we marched off for the trenches at midnight, and we relieved a battalion that had had a terrible "doing."

My platoon of over fifty men had to relieve a platoon that consisted of only fourteen sound men and no officers; and these trenches were like the ruins of slums compared with the trenches we had left. The sandbag parapets were either smashed in or torn to pieces by shells. Barbed wire and staples had been blown over into the trench, so that one could not pass along easily. The trench floor was a bumpy mixture of tumbled sandbags and ominous holes.

SNIPED, SHOT AND SHELLED

"THIS looks like the real thing at last," said C——, forcing a smile; I was one of a working party told off to go out under him and re-erect the barbed wire entanglements, while the other men laboured like ants at the parapets. We were sniped at and shelled the whole time, and had to do most of our work lying down. When the bullets came hotter we felt that we would like to crunch our way right into the soil somehow, and for many long minutes we could do nothing but clutch at the long grass with our hands, chins well down, heels level with the earth.

Even so, two men had to be dragged in with bullets through their skulls, and my pal C—— got one through the fleshy part of the thigh. But he did not give in, and got me to help him during the last half-hour or so, when the firing had died down, in rigging up a rough overhead splinter-proof for the officer's look-out.

The guns re-started with awful fury at the first streak of dawn, and alas! the very first shell shattered that splinter-proof to fragments. Luckily the officer had just left it a second previously to order us to stand to arms. It was a day of horror. Hardly a man touched a mouthful of food, though we all seemed to be desperately thirsty. The shells came sailing over in unceasing wave upon wave of hot iron. I heard a poor fellow on my left (a Section D Reserve man of the old school) mumbling broken prayers the whole time. He had seen a shell tear a frightful cavity in his young brother's breast. We all lived in momentary expectation of a like fate.

At nightfall C—— and myself suggested something to eat, but poor "Robbie," who had seen some men buried alive by a shell, refused to touch anything. C—— kept up a sort of forced liveliness, and when the sergeant-major came along to say that we must be prepared to make a counter-attack just before dawn, C—— asked if he might be allowed to go into action playing his mouth-organ.

DASTARDLY FIRE ATTACK

"ROBBIE," however, was very preoccupied and his silence rather got on our already shaken nerves. "I'm very sorry," he said once, when we rallied him, "but I feel something's going to happen tomorrow. Still, if it does, do all you can to cheer up my wife, old pals, if you get through."

We tried to laugh him down, but the laugh was a miserable failure somehow. Besides, shells were still coming along at regular intervals. The Germans, however, seemed to be aware that they had failed to shake us by that means, so they tried the despicable trick which so shocked the world.

We first heard sounds as of a splashing to our front, then there was a peculiar smoky smell just like coal-tar; next, a corporal of C Company cried out that he had been hit by a shell; yet when we went to look at him we found that a huge blister as from a burn was on his forehead, while the back of his cap was smouldering.

We had no time to notice anything else, for after that preliminary trial the Boches loosened their liquid fire upon us with a vengeance. It came in streams all over the earthworks, while shells containing star lights ignited the black fluid. Sandbags, blankets, top-coats, and anything of the sort that was handy smouldered and then flared. We were choked by the smoke and half scorched by the heat.

Our first instinct had been to fly to our dug-outs under the parapets where the liquid could not touch us. I know that C——, "Robbie" and I had just made ourselves as safe as possible in our earthy nook, when the captain's whistle blew and we heard the non-coms. yelling: "Stand to arms!"

The Germans were upon us. That dastardly liquid fire attack had been a mere preliminary, by which they had hoped to wipe us all out. But once again their plans had miscarried. Those of us who had survived felt enraged to such a pitch by the foulness of the deed and by the memory of our comrades' sufferings, that we would have charged cheerfully straight into hell if only thereby we could have got at the enemy.

We were not required to do that, however, for they came willingly to the slaughter themselves—for pure slaughter it was. Whether they were over-confident as to the deadly effects of their all-day shelling and then the liquid fire, I do not know; but certainly they came swaggering on in a sort of scrambling run with perfect carelessness and indifference. We did not make one sign. We waited with fingers on triggers.

WE had ample time to note that the first line of the attackers were all fine picked men, the 126th and 132nd Regts., but that behind them came a queer, hobbling, nondescript rabble of Landsturm reserves, men dressed anyhow, all middle-aged, some with beards, many with glasses, and a number so fat that they could hardly waddle over the broken ground. I suppose it was pitiful that such men, fathers of families, should be sent as food for our British bullets; but we had no time to think then. We were just filled with the lust of killing, a lust that had been fully fed by that wicked liquid fire; and so—we let them have it.

LIKE DOGS WORRYING RATS

DOWN went the first line of Prussians like ninepins, and immediately the poor devils of Landsturm men turned tail, and we could pick them off at our leisure, while our artillery shrapnel shells fell among them just like fierce dogs worrying fat rats. The thrill of that was superb. There was no doubt in my mind now that Germany was very short of real men in that part of the line; and we knew that we could always beat them—as men.

We hardly lost a man in that little business; but it was in the charge, when we had to capture the German lines, that we suffered mostly. For their barbed wire was of inconceivable thickness and spread for hundreds of yards, while their trenches seemed to be manned by nothing but Maxim guns.





TESTING A FIENDISH DEVICE

When the first flammenwerfers came into use, exhaustive tests of them were made by the French, and these photographs show them in progress. In the top photograph one man is directing the nozzle while the other observes the results through a hyposcope, a form of periscope. The lower photograph shows the liquid fire reaching the earth. To produce liquid fire a mixture of petrol and kerosene was blown through a hose pipe by compressed air and ignited as it left the nozzle. The range was about 30 to 100 yards.

Certainly very few Germans did we see as we plunged forward like one man, bubbling over with eagerness and excitement like wild beasts after raw meat. Yet all the time the bullets came at us in an unending stream, and men were going down all round me. As we took trench after trench we got mixed up and I sadly missed both C——and " Robbie." Then I found myself alorg with some men and an officer of the Durham Light Infantry, who had been charging after the Germans like furies let loose.

We got into a German trench at last and took up positions to stem a coming counter-attack. One of our young officers ran up with a machine-gun on his shoulder and we thought we were all right; but just as the Germans came on again there was a very critical moment when the machine-gun jammed and would not work. Moreover, our ammunition was running short. The machine-gun officer was swearing and tugging at the gun and perspiring profusely. I was running up to give him a hand, as I know a bit about mechanism, when down I went plugged by a bullet. But in the midst of my pain I felt happy as at last I heard the sweet music of the " rat-tat-tat " burst from our machine-gun just near me.

It was on my way back that I stumbled on the rigid body of poor " Robbie," shot clean between the eyes.

OUTWITTED by the BRITISH SECRET SERVICE

The Story of a Master Spy

by Captain von Rintelen

CAPTAIN VON RINTELEN (Franz Rintelen von Kleist) was on the Naval War Staff in Berlin when war broke out. In 1915 he was sent on a secret mission to the United States to prevent by any means in his power the shipment of munitions to the Allies. He was recalled by telegram to Berlin, but the British Naval Intelligence tracked him down and took him off a Dutch liner in the English Channel. Here we have his own lively and verbatim account of the battle of wits which he fought and lost with the head of the Admiralty Intelligence, Sir Reginald Hall

I AGAIN became E. V. Gaché from Solothurn, and booked a passage on the Noordam, of the Holland-American Line. Accompanying me was a man whom I had engaged to help me during the crossing. He was a genuine American citizen and appeared in public as my friend.

. . . . . .

We descended to the dining-room and I ordered a bottle of wine to disperse my unenviable thoughts. As I looked round I received a dreadful shock. Sitting at a table opposite was a man whom I had known well in Berlin and had often met at dances, Count Limburg-Stirum, of the Dutch branch of the family. I must have grown pale, for my companion whispered :

" What's the matter ? "

Limburg-Stirum had already crossed over to greet me, and asked : " Do you think you are going to get across safely?"

I registered astonishment and replied :

" Why not ? "

" Well, after all, you are a German ! "

" I ? A German ? Good heavens, I am a Swiss. In those days I was attached to the Swiss Legation in Berlin." . . .

The good ship Noordam continued her voyage, and at last the chalk cliffs of England lay to port. I gazed at them with mixed feelings. It took a whole day to pass them . . . The chalk cliffs still lay on our left, when early in the morning, at seven o'clock on Friday, August 13, as I was lying in my bath, a steward knocked at the door, and said :

" Some British officers wish to have a word with you."

This was the darkest moment of my life.

. . . . . .

I WAS separated from my companion and taken by train, under the escort of a detective and a naval officer, to London, where, to my amazement, I was driven to Scotland Yard.

We entered a building like a castle and crossed a courtyard to a mighty curved staircase. Through broad corridors instilling an atmosphere of peaceful dignity, we came to a door which opened suddenly and admitted us to a room occupied by a group of naval officers in gold-encrusted uniforms. It was not long before I learned that two of them, who wore the aiguillettes of royal aides-de-camp, were Admiral Sir Reginald Hall, the Chief of the British Naval Intelligence Service, and his right-hand man, Lord Herschell. To the left of the fire-place stood a heavy table, behind which sat the Chief of the C.I.D., Sir Basil Thomson, wearing horn-rimmed spectacles.

This pleasant gathering in my honour offered exciting prospects. They all sat there and bored me through with malevolent eyes. Admiral Hall stood up.

"Do you know a Captain Rintelen ? "

" I am not obliged to answer you."

Sir Basil Thomson : " You apparently do not know where you are ! "

" Wherever I am, I have been brought by force. I have no business here, and I shall not reply to any questions until I have spoken with the Minister of my country. Or am I, perhaps, to be charged with a crime ? "

Sir Basil Thomson : " You are a German and have to explain why you are on English soil."

" I did not land on English soil of my own free will. I was brought here by force in violation of all justice."

My reply caused a great uproar. Hall and Thomson grew irritated, while I pretended to get angry and, keeping faithfully to my rôle, began to shout that I protested against the whole proceedings and demanded to be taken to the Swiss Minister. I insisted on this right until they actually became uncertain of their case . . . .

THE meeting broke up, and I was informed that I should be escorted at once to the Swiss Legation. The Minister, M. Gaston Carlin, was a dignified old gentleman, tall and with white hair, and he spoke in German.

" Now tell me," he said, " what this is all about. . . . What do the English want with you ? I have heard from my office that your passports and military papers are in order, but the English maintain obstinately that you are the German Captain Rintelen. Can you explain how they conceived the idea ? "

I decided to risk a great bluff.

" I can disclose it to you, your Excellency," I said. " Captain Rintelen really was on the boat, but the British have got hold of the wrong man. The Noordam, as I have read in " The Times," has already reached Rotterdam,



SPY, BUT A GALLANT OFFICER

Captain von Rintelen was admittedly a spy, but he showed remarkable courage, and he was described by the naval correspondent of the " Daily Telegraph " as " a gallant officer and gentleman from beginning to end."

and the German officer, whom I did not want to betray to the English, is far away by now. You see, your Excellency, my sympathies are with Germany. I spent my boyhood there, and you will remember that my father was Swiss Consul at Leipzig."

"Oh, yes, I remember your father. Your attitude has been quite correct."...

He telephoned in my presence to the Admiralty and communicated the disconcerting solution of the mystery, after which my escort took me back to Admiral Hall. Everybody was foaming with rage at having let the German captain slip through their hands, but the Admiral, who alone remained perfectly calm, came up to me and said:

"So you are not Rintelen?"

"I gave all explanations to my Minister."

Nevertheless, I was not immediately set at liberty. I was to be kept in custody until the evening of the following day, and should then be allowed to resume my journey. Two "adjutants" were attached to me, a naval commander and a detective, and I took up my quarters at the Hotel Cecil. I felt that the battle was won and ordered a drink. Nothing could happen to me, and I only had to wait for the settling of a few formalities. I began to wonder how soon I could be in Berlin.

My two companions sat in the adjoining room, with the communicating door ajar, so that they might keep an eye on me and see that I did not escape. I walked to and fro, and heard them conversing.

Suddenly a remark was dropped which made me prick up my ears and listen intently:

"... a special inquiry in Berne by the British Legation?"

"Yes. It isn't merely a consular matter. Admiral Hall has specially asked the Legation to find out whether it is possible that Emile Gaché is now in London."

I had heard enough to know that my position was serious, that I had lost the fight when a minute before I had been convinced that I had won. I raged round the room. The Legation in Berne was bound to discover that the real Emile Gaché was living in Switzerland, and could not now be in London. When the English knew that, I should be in a hole.

I reasoned as follows: as I had been the only passenger, with the exception of the American, to be examined and taken off the boat, they must be aware that I had embarked on the Noordam in New York, and if they knew that they must possess information concerning what I had been doing in America. That meant that a blow had been struck against us in the United States, which I had only escaped by my departure. When the answer arrived from Berne, I should be regarded as a civilian and sent back to America in custody, where a disagreeable welcome would await me. Whatever happened, they would not let me go, so it was better to be a prisoner of war than to be sent to an American jail. After I had rapidly reviewed the situation, I knocked at the door and said to one of my "warders":

"Excuse me. Is it possible to have a word with Admiral Hall at once?"

"I don't think so. What do you want? Is it so urgent?"

"Yes, it is. Admiral Hall will be highly interested in what I have to say to him."

"Well, tell me then."

"No. I cannot do that. I must speak to the Admiral himself."

He went to the telephone. It was already eight in the evening, but the Admiral was still in his office and prepared to receive me at once. Rain was streaming down as we crossed the courtyard of the Admiralty. Hall was standing in his room, and asked: "What brings you here at so late an hour?"

COCKTAILS AT THE ADMIRALTY

I stood to attention: "I surrender."

"What do you mean? We have just wired to Berne on your account . . ."

"That is why I have come. It is no longer necessary."

"What does all this mean?"

"Captain Rintelen begs to report to you, sir, as a prisoner of war."

The Admiral dropped into his seat. He gazed at me, rocked a little in his chair, then sprang up and clapped me on the shoulder as he growled appreciatively: "That was well done." He tore open the door to the adjoining room, called in Lord Herschell and said: "Let me introduce you to our latest prisoner of war, Kapitänleutnant von Rintelen!"

Herschell turned on his heel, went into his own office, and returned with a bottle and three glasses.

"Sit down," he said, "and let's have a cocktail to get over the shock. You are fond of cocktails, aren't you?"

"What do you mean? How do you know that?"

Herschell replied: "From New York!"

It was growing late, and the two officers proposed that we should dine together before I was sent to a concentration camp. We drove to a club to which they both belonged, and entered the dining-room in which a large number of British officers were sitting.

"I wonder what they'd say if they knew who you were," Herschell remarked.

The Admiral selected a table in a corner where we could be alone and talk quietly. He and Lord Herschell naturally had a lot that they wanted to ask me, and in order to make me loquacious they told me things which gave me a thrill of horror as I listened. Certainly they did not reveal any important secrets.

They were only, in their own view, giving me a few details of the world-embracing activity of the Naval Intelligence Service, yet it grew clear to me that during the whole of the war we had undertaken practically nothing without the British Secret Service having previously acquired information on each occasion about our intended moves.

I spent a long evening with the two Englishmen and learned much of which I had hitherto been ignorant.

"You need not have waited so long for that cocktail I gave you at the Admiralty, Captain," said Lord Herschell.

"So long?"

"We expected you four weeks ago. Our preparations had been made for your reception, but you took your time. Why did you not leave New York as soon as you got the telegram?"

What was that? What was he saying? There are times when one cannot trust one's own ears!

"Beyond a doubt, Kapitänleutnant," Admiral Hall went on, "it will hurt your feelings as a German officer, but it was not so much the work of our own agents that you fell into our hands! You may thank your Naval or Military Attachés for that—whichever of the two it may have been. I don't know . . . Were you always in full harmony with —er—Captain von Papen?"

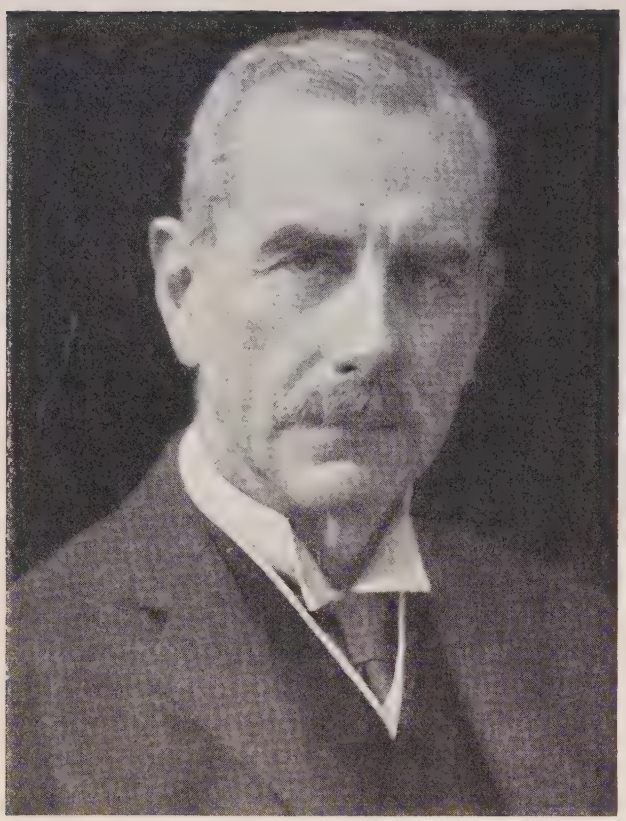
"What do you mean by that, sir?"

"Still something unpleasant for you to hear. There must be a certain limit to human recklessness . . . he wired and wirelessed your name so often to Berlin in good honest straightforward German that he just played you into our hands. It seemed almost deliberate . . ."

I was tongue-tied. I had been betrayed! They seemed to know everything—my sudden recall . . . everything. With an effort I harked back to the earlier topic of conversation.

"I don't get your meaning, Lord Herschell. Which telegram were you talking about?"

Admiral Hall bent over the table towards me. He pushed his spectacles aside, looked at me keenly, and said, with pointed sarcasm:



Elliott and Fry

HE DEALT WITH GERMAN SPIES

During the Great War Sir Basil Thomson, seen above, was Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, and many a man suspected of being a German agent was brought before him for interrogation. Captain von Rintelen was one, and in this chapter he gives a graphic account of his encounter with Sir Basil at Scotland Yard.

" We mean the telegram which you received on July the 6th, that is to say, a month ago. Captain Boy-Ed met you at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Forty-fifth Street, where he handed you the wire and—just wait a minute—I'll read you the text."

He put his hand in his breast pocket and drew out a small packet of papers, one of which he extracted and, to my astonishment, read out as follows :

" To the German Embassy, for the Naval Attaché. Captain Rintelen is to be informed unobtrusively that he is under instructions to return to Germany."

" WHAT do you say to that ? " he asked. " Were we not right in saying that you took your time ? "

A certain macabre humour, which I had managed to retain up till then, began to desert me.

" Where did you get hold of the telegram, Sir Reginald ? How did you get to know about it ? Surely it was in code, wasn't it ? "

" It was in code all right, Captain, but we decoded it. As a matter of fact, we had lost trace of you over there for a couple of weeks, but when you booked your passage, and then when you embarked on the Noordam—from that moment you were our prisoner," he added rather maliciously.

I sat back in my chair and involuntarily thought of the day when the excellent Boniface appeared in my office and gloomily reported that British agents had copied the German Naval Attaché's " Most Secret" G.G. Code.

Hall had been watching me closely.

" We also have in our possession telegrams to Count Spee, the Admiral commanding the cruiser squadron," remarked Lord Herschell casually, as if lost in thought.

What was that ? Surely Admiral Spee and his squadron had been cornered by British battle-cruisers as far back as December 8, 1914. Yet Lord Herschell was apparently maintaining that the British had intercepted telegrams to him too. But the theft of the code from the Naval Attaché had only happened much later. How could the two things be reconciled ? I wanted to know, so proceeded on a little piece of bluff.

" But you only had the code copied long after December 1914 ! "

HALL shot out at me :

" When did you say we had the code copied ? "

It was a trap. He was obviously wanting to find out whether I knew when and how the code had been copied. I made a rapid calculation. I was a prisoner of war in England. As such I should certainly find some means of getting information through to Germany pretty soon. But I had to have details. Could it do any harm if I told these two officers here and now that I knew how the code had been stolen ? I thought hurriedly : " No, it could harm no one if I ventured on a little fun now."

" Oh, I see," said I. " You mean that affair in New York, when you put that young woman on to the secretary at the Embassy. Why, every child has heard of that."

The two of them looked at me somewhat taken aback. Then Hall replied, grinding the words out slowly through his teeth :

" Every child has heard of that, has it ? In that case, can you explain to me why they are still using this code in Berlin ? "

There we had it ! A painful silence followed, during which wild ideas coursed through my brain. I was tormented by horrible suspicions. So Papen had telegraphed my name quite openly ! . . . Had *he* had a finger in this pie ? I had long been afraid that it would come to this, though I had, as a matter of course, sent a written warning to Berlin immediately after my conversation with the Naval Attaché. " The code is in the enemy's hands ; don't use it any longer for telegraphing. Change it as quickly as possible."

WHY I FAILED

I KNEW from certain sources that my message had reached Berlin safely, but apparently nobody had taken any notice of it. It was enough to make one weep ! The healthy faces of the two Englishmen regained their serenity, and Hall went on :

" You gave us no end of trouble at that time, Captain. We had found the first code ; we had fished it out when the cruiser Magdeburg went down not far from Kronstadt a few days after the beginning of the war. The captain had thrown it overboard. It was very convenient for us, as we picked up all telegrams from Berlin to New York until such time as you went to America, bringing a new G.G. Code with you.

" You had hardly got there when they started using it. Of course, we had been informed that you were coming, that you were going to America, and taking a new code over ; all that had been telegraphed to New York, and we had read it. From that moment we were unable to decipher your people's telegrams any longer, till we got hold of the new code too."

I was horrified. What damage couldn't the British do to Germany if they could read the telegrams which were sent all over the world from Berlin ! It simply did not bear thinking about. I clung to one hope : I must and should find means to get a message through to Germany from my captivity that the code was no longer secret. But then I went hot and cold all over, for I had already sent just such a message to Germany. They already had in their possession a written document from me, containing the words : " For God's sake be careful ; the code has leaked out." I had already told them, so urgent had Boniface's warnings been, and what had

happened ? They went on telegraphing in the same code. If they had neglected my first warning, no doubt my second message would find its way into the waste-paper basket. . . .

It was ghastly. I forced myself to keep calm ; the mischief was out and seemed bent on taking its course.

"By the way, I was meaning to ask you some more about the telegram to Admiral von Spee, Lord Herschell," I remarked after a pause, which had given me time to draw breath after the shattering events of the evening. In the meantime the port had done its work and pulled me together. Also, by the mercy of Providence, Herschell was at that moment in the act of sending an Admiralty message off with the German evening communiqué, which he proceeded to read to us, Admiral Hall and myself, with an expression of vinegary sweetness on his face :

" The occupation of the outer forts of Grodnö is progressing satisfactorily . . ."

" How about the telegram to Count Spee ? " I asked him.

" We'll come to that later—at my flat perhaps . . . It's time we left here. If you've no objection, we'll just have a whisky and soda at my place before the military authorities take charge of you. As from midnight you're in their hands as prisoner of war."

So we got into his magnificent motor car and drove to his bachelor flat in St. James's Street.

I looked round his study with some surprise.

" I expect you know most of these people," Herschell remarked.

" Yes, indeed."

All round the walls and bookcases were dozens of silver-framed photographs of German princes and princesses.





Russell

MASTER-MIND OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

From the beginning to the end of the war Admiral Sir Reginald Hall (seen in the top photograph as he was in war-time, and in the lower one as he is today) was Director of the Intelligence Division of the Admiralty War Staff. The Division worked most successfully and attained astonishingly correct forecasts of the movements of enemy ships and submarines, and Admiral Hall, though his work was necessarily unknown to the general public, made a great contribution towards the final victory.

" When one has served for years as a lord-in-waiting . . ." Herschell smiled. " And one day peace will break out again between us and their Highnesses over there."

The present was forgotten and we exchanged memories of the peaceful days before the war.

Meanwhile Admiral Hall, always chivalrous, had composed a telegram to my people in Germany, to relieve their minds on the subject of my " absence." . . . " I'll hand the telegram in to the American Embassy tomorrow morning, and the day after your people will know that you're in good hands," added the Admiral with a grin.

Ten minutes to twelve, damn it !

Lord Herschell sat down at the piano.

" Now's your last chance ; what would you like best, my poor friend ? "

" The fire-music from the Walküre."

Fate really had me by the short hairs now. Where was the damned casualness of this young Military Attaché Papen going to land me now ?

Admiral Hall took me by the arm in an almost friendly way. " I'm afraid we must say good-bye now. There are two gentlemen waiting for you outside from the Military Police."

A handshake, as I thanked them for such hospitality in the middle of a war, and I was outside. A quarter of an hour later and I was at the police station

Home Front: First Bombs on England

May 31 — Oct. 13, 1915

THE first Zeppelin to rain bombs on London, LZ.38, arrived over the East End on the evening of May 31, 1915. The casualty list amounted to 7 killed and 35 injured. ¶ The famous woman publicist, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, who was a welfare worker in the East End at the time, describes with deep sympathy the sufferings of the civilian population under this new terror. ¶ Major Erich Linnarz, who commanded the Zeppelin, recounts with military detachment how he led the first death mission to London women and children. ¶ A later raid on the West End of London on October 13, 1915, when much greater damage was done, is described by an eye witness, Mr. James Wickham, then call boy at the Gaiety, who had a miraculous escape from death.



A WORKER FOR WOMEN

At the outbreak of war the campaign for "Votes for Women" was in full swing, but the leaders, including Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, seen above, immediately abandoned politics for social service.

* 83 May 31, 1915

I WAS in LONDON'S FIRST AIR RAID

by Sylvia Pankhurst

I WAS writing at home one evening. On the silence arose an ominous grinding . . . growing in volume . . . throbbing, pulsating . . . filling the air with its sound. . . .

Then huge reports smote the ear, shattering, deafening, and the roar of falling masonry . . . An air raid!

Mrs. Payne was on my threshold, her face ineffably tender. "Miss Pankhurst, come down to us!" Half-smiling, she reached out her arms to me. "Let us keep together!"

I WENT to her from my little table in the corner. She clung to me, trembling. The angry grinding still pulsated above us. Again that terrific burst of noise; those awful bangs, the roar of the falling buildings, the rattle of shrapnel on the roof close above our heads.

"No use to worry; only a few houses will be struck among the thousands," I rallied her gently, feeling detached from it all—and far away. The thought of the bombs crashing down on the densely populated city was appalling—yet for our household I had no least shade of apprehension—and for myself life had no great claim. I was only a member of the salvage corps, saving and succouring as I might amid this wreckage, happy if I might aid in laying some stones to build the city of the future.

"Come down," she pleaded, in the next quiet interval. Up or down was the same in a two-storied dwelling, aged and gimcrack; but to please her I went where she would, supporting her, for she almost failed at the stairs. Jim Payne was waiting for us below. . . . Again the huge reports, louder, yet louder; the roar more monstrous. . . .

"Jim, go and find Miss Smyth," Mrs. Payne murmured, her voice breaking. Obediently he fetched Smyth. She had been out on the flat roof, trying to see the aircraft, and was eager to return.

"NONSENSE!" I ordered. "Do not be foolhardy!" "This roof cannot save us if the house is struck," she protested. "I know, but you need not get shrapnel in your eyes," I answered her sharply. "Can you not hear it on the roof?"

More crashes silenced us. . . . More crashes! . . . More crashes! . . . Again more crashes . . . and each more monstrous . . . What a burst of sound, tremendous; the very earth shook with it! . . . More crashes . . . again . . . again, again. . . .

At last it was over.

Next morning there were pieces of shell on our flat roof. Swarms of children were out in the road picking up shrapnel, prizing up with impromptu tools the bits of metal which had embedded themselves in the road.

ANTI-GERMAN rioting broke out again. Panic ran rampant. A lighted cigarette-end was enough at times to gain a man a blow. Little Minnie O'Brien, with her bent little legs and pinched face showing childhood's rickets, came crying to me to tell me her father had smacked her face when she sat playing the piano after dusk, the gas lit and the dark curtains not drawn.

. . . . . .

To see the devastation wrought by last night's air raid unaccustomed visitors came flocking to the East End—well-dressed people in motors, journalists, photographers, high military officials, Red Cross nurses, policewomen, travellers from all over the world.

Impatient passengers on the tops of buses were asking before they had yet passed Bishopsgate: "Is this the East End?" Sightseers paused at Shoreditch Church because rumour declared it had been injured, though not a sign of damage was to be seen. Crowds stood with chins uncomfortably upstretched arguing whether the thin shadow cast by the lightning conductor might really be a crack. For hours a constant stream of people was passing through the churchyard, a cluster always gathering round the ancient stocks, because some lingered to look at them from interest, and others craned over their shoulders to see if those who paused were looking at a bomb.

Many West End folk gave up their search here and went home disappointed, yet only a stone's throw farther, in the poor alleys branching off from Hoxton Street, abundance of wreckage might be seen.

Every East End district has its own character. Bow always seemed to me the gayest, friendliest, and most colourful; Hoxton amongst the dreariest. In Hoxton Street I have more than once seen women fighting, a thing I have never witnessed in any other part of the East End.

TODAY these mean streets were thronged and seething. Poor people in frowzy garments crowded the roadways and squeezed past each other in the narrow alleys. What sights for the pretty ladies in dainty dresses, craning their slender white throats from taxi-cab windows! What sights for the rather too generously fed business men and well-groomed officers: miserable dwellings, far from fit for human families, poorly dressed women of working sort, with sad, worn faces; and others, sunk lower, just covered, no more, in horrid rags, hopeless, unhappy beings; half-clad neglected little children—sadder these even than the havoc wrought by German bombs!

Streams of people led the way to the damaged buildings, a babble of talk rising incessantly: "We poor people are being made to pay for it!" . . . "Why is everything so dear?" "Potatoes . . . not fit for pigs, and such a price!" . . . "Conscription?" "What! They don't need it. They can get all the poor fellows they want without!" . . . "They put off men as always worked hard and tell 'em to give their lives!"

CROWDS mostly made up of women gathered before each ruined home. One, where a child had been killed, was still inhabited. A soldier in khaki stood at the door striving in vain to keep back the press of human bodies surging against it. The people who lived there were scarcely able to force a way to their own door. A bomb had descended upon a brewery; from the roof to the cellar all had fallen, only the outer walls remained, and a mass of charred wood in the basement. Many dwellings were thus completely gutted. In the ashes left by the fires which had ravaged them nothing save the twisted ironwork of the bedsteads could be identified. A chorus of wailing stirred amongst the women: "Oh, my God! Look at the home!" . . .

RUMOUR raced hot-foot: "There were little lights signalling: telling them where to drop the bombs!" . . . "Germans!" . . . "Beasts." . . . "Germans!" . . . "I saw taxi-cabs driving up and down signalling!" . . "Germans!" . . .

"They should all have been cleared out at the beginning of the war!" . . . "The Government has nowhere to put them!" . . . "They go and give themselves up to the police and they tell them to go home. . . . Everywhere a bomb is dropped you'll find one of their shops was wrecked near!"

Alas, where in the East End would one fail to find a German shop which had been wrecked in the anti-German riots? Near to the brewery was a baker's shop with a German name on the fascia; the door, the shutters, the very window-frames had been torn off. It was boarded up now with new, unpainted wood. The crowds as they passed it growled imprecations; wild stories grew there.

In Hoxton Street was a rush of excitement. A German baker's, one of the few still remaining, had just been raided. "They were serving bread there an hour ago!" a surprised voice uttered. "They go in to buy bread from them, and then they wreck the shop," another answered. The windows were smashed, only a few jagged bits of glass still attached to the framework. The pavement was littered with glass and flour. The shop had been cleared of everything portable. A policeman stood at the door. Two soldiers came out laughing. "There is plenty of new bread downstairs if you want it; it will only be wasted there!" they called as they went off seeking new quarry.

DOWN the street police whistles sounded vociferously: a babel of shouting, tremendous outcry. A crowd was advancing at a run, a couple of lads on bicycles leading, a swarm of children on the fringes, screaming like gulls. Missiles were flying. In the centre of the turmoil men dragged a big, stout man, stumbling and resisting in their grasp,



WHEN DEATH CAME TO THE DOORSTEP

The German plea that the bombing of open towns was directed only against objectives of military importance was not justified by the facts. First Zeppelins and then bombing aeroplanes, having failed to find their mark, lightened their loads for the journey home across the North Sea by dropping bombs promiscuously wherever they could hope to strike terror into the hearts of the people of England. Above is a house in the suburbs of London in May 1915, in front of which a bomb was dropped during the raid described in this chapter

his clothes whitened by flour, his mouth dripping blood. They rushed him on. New throngs closed round him.

From another direction arose more shouting. A woman's scream. The tail of the crowd dashed off towards the sound. Crowds raced to it from all directions . . . fierce, angry shouts and yells. . . .

A woman was in the midst of a struggling mob ; her blouse half-torn off, her fair hair fallen, her face contorted with pain and terror, blood running down her bare white arm. A big, drunken man flung her to the ground. She was lost to sight. . . . " Oh, my God ! Oh ! They are kicking her ! " a woman screamed.

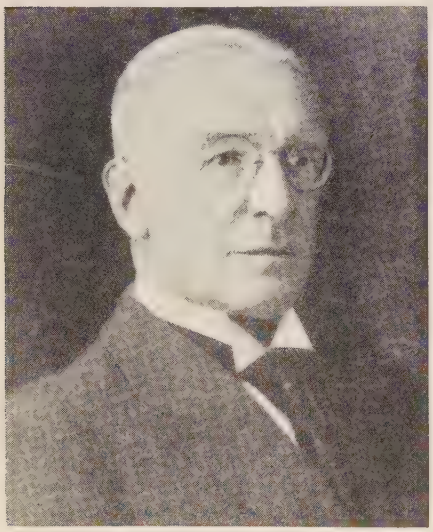
" Do help her ! " I pleaded with a soldier who stood watching. He shrugged his shoulders. " I can't do anything." " You are a soldier ; they will respect you ! " " Why should I ? " he asked with a curl of the lip. " Look, there's another soldier : can't you get on to *him ?* "

" She is covered with blood ! " a woman's voice cried again. I struggled to reach her, but the closely packed onlookers would not make way for me. An Army motor drove up and was halted by the press. An officer, hawk-eyed, aquiline, sat in the front ; there were vacant seats behind. I sprang to the step : " A woman is being hurt here. Will you take her away from the crowd ? " " I don't think we can ; we are on military business," he answered curtly. The horn was sounded, the people made way, the car drove on. . . .

The woman on the ground was unconscious. Those who a moment before had shrieked imprecations were seized with pity. The nearest raised her and rested her on a fruiterer's upturned barrel. A couple of women supported her with their arms ; another was fastening up her hair. She drooped, still nerveless, her colour gone, her eyes closed. They chafed her hands, the crowd about them silent and awed. Passion was spent. " I believe in all things being done in a proper manner." " Killing the woman won't do any good ! " Two voices were heard.

" Make a way there ! Make a way there ! Move on ! Move on ! " the police came shouting and pushing through the throng, hustling away with equal roughness the onlookers, the fainting woman and those who bore her.

Another mob swept round the corner, hot in fury, baiting a man in flour-covered clothing, wrenched and jerked by the collar, thumped on the back, kicked from the rear. " All right, guv'ner ; all right," he articulated between the blows, in humble and reasoning Cockney-tones, fully typic as that of his assailants. Alas, poor Patriotism, what foolish cruelties are committed in thy name !



Daily Express

ACE OF THE LZ.38

To Major Erich Linnarz, commander of the airship LZ.38, fell the duty of leading the first Zeppelin raid on London in May, 1915. His attack was the forerunner of others, in which death came to both raiders and raided. But Linnarz survived, and he is shown here as he is today.

*** 84 May 31, 1915**

I WAS LONDON'S FIRST ZEPP RAIDER

by Major Erich Linnarz

MAJOR LINNARZ, who was commander of Zeppelin LZ.38, had been four times over England before, on May 31, 1915, he succeeded in reaching London. This was London's first air raid, and Major Linnarz dropped 119 bombs on Leytonstone, Stoke Newington, Whitechapel, Stepney, and Shoreditch. The casualties were seven killed and 35 injured. He describes in this historic narrative his sensations throughout the journey and the raid. While he was returning he was attacked by anti-aircraft guns and nine British pilots, but succeeded in making his escape

ON the evening of May 31, 1915, the sun, setting behind the Zeppelin sheds at Brussels-Evere, smeared the sky with crimson streaks as though fingers dipped in blood had been drawn across the horizon.

Sixteen years before there had been an international conference at The Hague. Forty-four Powers were represented on that occasion. It was a year before flight in the air by any means whatever (except balloons) was accomplished.

One of the results of this conference was a decision " To prohibit the launching of projectiles or explosives from balloons or other kinds of aerial vessels by nations at war." A manifesto to this effect was drawn up. But only twenty-seven of the forty-four Powers represented signed it. Germany was not one.

In August 1914 the drums of war sounded over Europe, and, with the staccato rattle of machine-guns and the growl of howitzers, there mingled for the first time the whine of hurtling aerial bombs.

There had been many discussions at German headquarters since the outbreak of war before it was decided to use the Zeppelin and its bombs as a weapon of war against British towns.

So far the raiding Zeppelin had been used only on the Western Front and for the purposes of naval reconnaissance.

It was not until January 1915 that the Kaiser at last sanctioned the bombing of England, and not until four months later that he was prevailed upon by his advisers to give his consent to attacking London.

The proud ship LZ.38, the latest product of Count Zeppelin's works at Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance, which I commanded, was one of those detailed for the job.

On the morning of May 31 orders in cipher were brought from Berlin to me at Brussels to raid London.

Preparations for the flight were carried out all that day. Engines were tested, ballast tanks examined, the radio apparatus thoroughly overhauled, and the huge deflated envelope closely inspected for flaws.

Presently there was the hiss of gas and slowly the monster took a more rigid shape.

Then the bomb-racks were loaded. One hundred and nineteen bombs there

were in all — eighty nine incendiary, thirty high-explosive ones. A ton and a half of death.

As the perspiring soldiers wheeled the infernal things on trucks before placing them in position, the setting sun sank behind the shed and stained the sky a deeper and more ominous red.

My crew, clad in their leather jackets and fur helmets, were standing in groups on the landing ground. A siren sounded shrilly and they moved to the shed, entered the gondola and took up their posts.

GENTLY guided by ropes the ship slid smoothly forward. The sounding of a second siren indicated that the ship was clear of its shed.

"Hands off, ease the guides," I shouted. The men at the ropes let go.

Great eddies of dust swept through the air as the final test to the mammoth propellers was given. An officer approached and told me all was ready, I stepped in, gave a signal, and mysteriously the ship soared upwards. We were on our way to London.

From my cabin, with its softly lit dials—every one with a story to tell—its maps, its charts, and compass, I could hear the rhythmic throb of the engines, feel the languorous swing of the gondola as we rode smoothly through space.

Over invaded Belgium we flew.

Here it was that one of my crew at the helm reported that he had sighted what he thought to be a hostile airship approaching. For safety I altered course and steered in the direction of Ostend.

Often raiding Zeppelins, on their way out from Belgium to England, encountered enemy craft endeavouring to intercept their passage. But, as it afterwards turned out, this one was only Captain Lehmann, who was killed in an airship crash in America last year, on one of the other Zeppelins detailed to raid England.



SHE GAVE LONDON ITS BAPTISM OF BOMBS

Though the German High Command at first had faith in their Zeppelins for successfully raiding England, their vulnerability was later revealed when British airmen shot down several of the great airships in flames and crippled others. Here is the LZ.38, Major Linnarz's Zeppelin, about to ascend from her base. How near to disaster the airship and her crew came when she raided London is described by the raider himself in this chapter.

Daily Express

HE had left Namur earlier, also with London as his aim, but over the Channel he had broken a propeller, which had pierced his gas-bag and forced him to return to his base. He was on his way back when we saw him. None of the other ships reached London that night, but discharged their bombs on East Coast towns.

On, on we sped. It was a beautiful night—a night of star-spangled skies and gentle breezes, a night hard to reconcile with a purpose as grim as ours.

And then the glimmer of water showed below and we knew we were over the sea. Tiny red specks winked at us. They were patrol boats keeping their ceaseless watch in the Channel, and we were looking down their funnels into the glowing heart of their stokehold furnaces. England!

We crossed the black ridge of the coast. Immediately from below anti-aircraft guns spat viciously. We could hear the shells screaming past us. We increased our altitude and our speed.

Across the Thames estuary we raced, wheeling inland at Shoeburyness, over Southend, which I had raided the week before—and then, following the gleaming river, we made straight for the capital.

Twenty minutes later we were over London. There below us its great expanse lay spread. I knew it all so well. I had spent several months there five years before.

There seemed to have been little effort to dim the city. There were the old familiar landmarks—St. Paul's, the Houses of Parliament, and Buckingham Palace, dreaming in the light of the moon which had now risen.



Daily Express

ZEPP MEN

In Britain the Zeppelin raids aroused bitter feelings, but those who carried them out were heroes in Germany. Here is Major Linnarz with two lieutenants who shared with him both danger and fame in 1915.

I glanced at the clock. It was ten minutes to eleven. The quivering altimeter showed that our height was 10,000 feet. The air was keen, and we buttoned our jackets as we prepared to deal the first blow against the heart of your great and powerful nation.

Inside the gondola it was pitch dark save for the glowing pointers of the dials. The sliding shutters of the electric lamps with which each one of the crew was provided were drawn. There was tension as I leaned out of one of the gondola portholes and surveyed the lacework of lighted streets and squares. An icy wind lashed my face.

I mounted the bombing platform. My finger hovered on the button that electrically operated the bombing apparatus.

Then I pressed it. We waited. Minutes seemed to pass before, above the humming song of the engines, there rose a shattering roar.

Was it fancy that there also leaped from far below the faint cries of tortured souls ?

I pressed again. A cascade of orange sparks shot upwards, and a billow of incandescent smoke drifted slowly away to reveal a red gash of raging fire on the face of the wounded city.

ONE by one, every thirty seconds, the bombs moaned and burst. Flames sprang up like serpents goaded to attack. Taking one of the biggest fires, I was able by it to estimate my speed and my drift. Beside me my second in command carefully watched the result of every bomb and made rapid calculations at the navigation chart.

Suddenly from the depths great swords of light stabbed the sky. One caught the gleam of the aluminium of our gondola, passed it, retraced, caught it again, and then held us in its beam. Instantly the others chased across the sky, and we found ourselves moving through an endless sea of dazzling light.

Inside the gondola it was brighter than sunlight. Every detail of the car was thrown into sharp relief. The crew at their posts looked like a set of actors grouped in the limelight without their make-up.

And so began a game of hide and seek in the sky. The helmsman and I tried every way of eluding the searchlights, practising every trick of navigation.



Topical

THE EARLY ZEPPELIN BOMB

Besides a large number of high-explosive bombs, many incendiary bombs were carried by the L.Z. 38 and her sister airships when they flew through the night sky to deal death and destruction to England's towns. Sometimes these missiles failed to explode, as was the case at Westcliff, where the undetonated incendiary bomb shown above was picked up to become a mere souvenir. In later raids the bombs used were of greatly increased destructive power, making the Zeppelin attacks a most serious menace.

Then came the bark of the batteries. Shells shrieked past us, above us, below us. There were glowing tracer shells which we had never seen before, but had heard all about—slim projectiles that tore a hole in the ship's fabric and then burst into flame.

It was this thought that sent us home quickly. We had been over London for an hour.

Soon we left the thrusting search-lights behind. We could see ahead of us the sea, through which the moon had laid a silver path to guide us home. As we crossed the black ridge of the shore we were met with a further attack from the anti-aircraft guns at Burnham and Southminster.

I THINK our gondola light, now alight and casting a feeble glow over the cabin, perhaps had betrayed us. I put it out. Shell after shell whizzed past, some of them the dreaded incendiary type. Some burst dangerously near. On, on we flew, and at last we were out of range and the firing died down.

Now a new menace threatened us—aeroplanes. We went in dread of these since your pilots had orders that if they failed to reach us with machine-gun fire they were to climb above us and ram our gasbags with their machines.

Evidently the supreme sacrifice meant nothing to these brave men. One by one they came from the airfields that had been established round the coast to intercept returning raiders.

My look-out thought he spotted one flying towards us. Higher we rose out of reach. The British aeroplanes were faster than we were, but they couldn't reach our height limit.

PRESENTLY, in the fading moonlight, we could see the waves beating against the Belgian coastline far below. We were feeling cold and hungry, exhausted and spent from the high-pitched hours of that night—rather like the remorseful reveller returning in the hour before the dawn.

It was almost dawn. The first vague light was edging the horizon as we flew over invaded Belgium. We had been away ten hours. The first attack on London had been accomplished. Our bomb rack was empty.

Behind us we could faintly make out the red glow of fire on the sky's rim. It was ravaged London.

And as we sank to earth and the gondola bumped across the landing-ground at Brussels-Evere, the sun rising in front of the Zeppelin sheds, smeared the sky with crimson streaks as though fingers dipped in blood had been drawn across the horizon.



L.N.A.

WAR COMES TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Before London was bombed by Zeppelins in May 1915, Southend had had a visit from one of Germany's pirates of the skies. On May 10 the LZ38 appeared over the estuary of the Thames and after dropping one incendiary bomb close to the S.S. Royal Edward moored off Southend as a prisoners-of-war hulk, passed over the town about three o'clock in the morning, dropping four high explosive and many incendiary bombs. The photograph shows a wrecked house in West Street. LZ38 was commanded by Major D. Erich Linnarz, whose story of the first Zeppelin raid on London is told in this chapter.

GRISLY DEATH OVER the GAIETY

by James Wickham

Call-boy at the Gaiety Theatre on the Night of the Raid

ONE of the most destructive of the Zeppelin raids took place over the West End of London on October 13, 1915—when bombs were dropped in the heart of theatreland, causing great loss of life and damage to property. The author, call-boy at the Gaiety Theatre on that evening, was seriously wounded. He here describes in graphic staccato phrases the scenes which he witnessed and pays tribute to the great courage shown by the actors who were performing at the time. This raid accounted over all England for 71 killed and 128 injured

OCTOBER 13, 1915. A moonless night. London was apprehensive. Its mood was tense. Zeppelin warfare during the last moonless period had accounted for forty-four lives, had maimed 180, and caused damage in the City alone to the extent of £510,672.

Altogether nine of these fearful air monsters had come and gone night after night—unscathed, almost unchallenged.

So far not one had been brought down on British soil. Our air defences and combative forces in the air at this stage of the war were far from perfect. The Zeppelins seemed to be having things pretty well all their own way.

LONDON was rather "on edge." Yet, true to the "carry on" policy of the British nation, the West End, it seemed, did not lack gaiety on that October night as I made my way along the Strand to the Gaiety Theatre, where I had recently secured the post of call-boy.

Restaurants were crowded. From behind the heavily curtained windows of the big hotels there came the sound of merry-making.

The popping of champagne corks. The pulse of dance music. Heady laughter. There were toasts, farewells, tears, promises, kisses. War! Tonight—Blighty. Tomorrow—who cared?

London, capital of the Empire, had everything in the way of pleasure to offer her sons on leave.

Theatres were flourishing; "House Full" boards hung round their entrances every night. At the Gaiety we had been playing "Tonight's the Night" to packed houses.

What a striking contrast to the gloom and dimness of the streets was the glamour within the thronging theatres.

Soft lights glowed in their auditoriums. There was the surge of lively tuneful music. Bewitching choruses. Frivolous songs. Provocative dancing. Smart quips. War burlesques.

Almost impossible amid all this light-hearted gaiety to realize the horrors being enacted a hundred miles distant. Had it not been for the ubiquitous khaki—in stalls, in pit, in gallery—the war would have seemed even more remote.

In the shadowy streets—for the Defence of the Realm Act in regard to lighting was being strictly enforced—crowds jostled and shouldered. Khaki everywhere.

Newsboys vociferously proclaimed the latest news from the front. I bought a paper. "Gallant Serbia Hard Pressed" streamed the headlines.

Street vendors cried their wares by the feeble light of oil lamps. A barrel-organ fumbled with the melody of the moment—"Keep the Home Fires Burning." Some distant clock chimed the hour of seven.

NIGHT OF ILL OMEN

A BEAM of light swung across the sky. And then others. They crossed and recrossed in fantastic patterns. Some of the people in the streets occasionally glanced upwards at the ever-moving shafts uneasily. But the majority went their various ways unheeding. We Londoners are adaptable.

Groping our way about darkened streets, sweetening our beverages with saccharine, and buying the diminutive Sunday joint with the aid of a food card that we had accepted with characteristic stoicism. In the majority we were accepting the danger that lurked above in moonless nights in the same spirit.

I had been at the theatre for nearly an hour. "Overture and Beginners" had been called. The curtain had risen on Act 1.

As I walked down the corridor breathing a sigh of relief that my duties were temporarily finished, the waves of laughter greeting the quips of Mr. George Grossmith and Mr. Leslie Henson reached me. London was enjoying itself.

But then London did not know that three hours earlier an urgent message had been flashed from France to the War Office that five Zeppelins had been noticed making for the East Coast.

I heard it from Jupp, the stage-door keeper. We often heard things of that kind at the Gaiety. Marconi House was next door . . .

"Suppose they're coming again tonight," grumbled Jupp.

I glanced out of the door across to the west. There was a perfect trellis of searchlight beams raking the blue-black sky.

The pavements were still crowded. Shadowy groups gossiped at street corners. Omnibuses and taxi-cabs, dimly lit, loomed up from and receded into the enshrouding gloom.

A CLOCK struck nine. Twenty minutes to go to the first interval.

A few minutes later I heard my name being called. It was the stage manager who wanted me. "Just run across to the post with these letters, Jimmy," he said. "We've a special rehearsal call for the morning and they must go off tonight."

As I went out of the stage-door I met Billy, the page. "Come over to the post with me, Billy," I said. He was a bright little lad of fifteen; I was three years older. Only too glad of a little relaxation, he readily agreed.

The nearest pillar-box was at the top of Catherine Street, which lies immediately opposite the stage door of the Gaiety, and together we crossed Aldwych and made our way alongside the Strand Theatre.

I stopped a moment to light a cigarette, carefully screening the match. Billy waited.

"They say the Zepps are on their way, the swine," I remarked.

As though my words had released ten thousand furies there was the sudden crackle of anti-aircraft gunfire, and simultaneously a dreadful sound that London knew only too well—a sound like no other on earth. It was the mournful wail created by the velocity of a descending bomb.

In the one brief terrible moment before the impact I instinctively knew it was coming directly where we stood. I was not wrong. It exploded three yards from where we were standing. It flung me against the wall next the pit



AFTER A NIGHT OF TERROR

The terrible damage done in the neighbourhood of the Strand and Aldwych during the raid described by Mr. Wickham is shown in these two photographs taken the morning after. Above is the scene outside the Lyceum Theatre. Below is the spot where the bomb which blew Billy, the page, to pieces outside the Strand Theatre fell. The bombs were dropped by Zeppelin L.15, commanded by Kapitänleutnant Breithaupt, which came over London from the north-west.

Imperial War Museum





MENACE ABOVE THE METROPOLIS

With the initial raid on London the city's teeming populace experienced for the first time some of the unrelenting realities of war. Then, as raid followed raid, the sights and sounds that came with the night air attacks, and which are so vividly described in this chapter, became familiar to those who lived in the metropolis. Those nights are recalled by this unique photograph taken in London in September 1915, when a Zeppelin was caught in a searchlight's beam.

entrance to the Strand Theatre. It sucked me back again. It dashed me to the ground. Masonry fell. Glass rained. I felt unhurt; only dazed. Yet I had twenty-two lumps of shrapnel embedded in me. They carried me downstairs into the bar of the Strand Theatre.

The streets were pandemonium.

I asked for Billy, but he had been blown to pieces. I could hear screams in the street outside. The dull, vibrant thud of more bombs.

Others were brought in and laid beside me. Some were moaning, some calling for missing friends and relatives. Someone rushed in and said a London General omnibus had been blown to bits in Aldwych, opposite the Waldorf. It was true.

More injured were brought in. They were carried on theatre boards.

There was a ring of ambulance bells, the imperious clang of fire alarms. And above it all a terrible, insistent thudding.

More bombs. Death. Destruction.

Would they never cease this agonizing rain of death?

They held every card up there. It was so easy for them.

THE stories of that night are terrible ones. The Zeppelin—it was the L15 on her maiden voyage to England—had manoeuvred herself into line with the Strand and travelled eastwards, dropping bombs at short intervals.

Two fell barely a second before the one that hit me, in a narrow street running parallel to the Strand between the Lyceum and Covent Garden.

The little street was crowded. As the first bomb exploded people were flung in all directions. One woman was blown to pieces. Another was cut in two by a sheet of glass blown from a shop front.

When those in the vicinity who were unhurt recovered sufficiently to lend help, they found thirty-eight people prone on the pavement, in the roadway or the gutters. All round was the glitter of glass. It lay everywhere in millions of pieces.

There was an old orange seller who had been standing at the gallery entrance to the Lyceum. She lay huddled dead against the wall, still clutching her wares.

A man from the audience had hurried down the staircase into the street when the firing began, leaving his wife in her seat. He never returned. He was instantly killed by a flying fragment of shell from our own anti-aircraft guns.

One man, terribly mutilated, yet still clutching a glass and sandwich, was discovered half inside and half outside a public-house whose walls had been shattered by the explosion.

NINE other people in the saloon had been wiped out. A barmaid was killed . . .

Every theatre—there were five in the immediate vicinity—was used as a dressing station. Here, where suddenly tragedy had taken the place of the earlier hilarity, doctors attended to wounds.

There was irony in the shrapnel-riddled boards that hung forlornly outside the Gaiety proclaiming " To-night's the Night."

Mr. Leslie Henson worked valiantly to calm the audience when the terrific din occurred outside the theatre.

Many rose in alarm. Chorus girls stood transfixed on the stage. Some were on the point of running into the streets in their flimsy attire. Mr. Henson saw all the dangers. He ordered the orchestra to strike up a rollicking tune; he led the girls in a lively dance, he cracked jokes and struck comical gestures. The situation was saved.

Within a mile of the Strand nineteen bombs in all were hurled. One hit a home for Belgian refugees in Aldwych. Another narrowly missed Somerset House.

Another fell between the walls of the Divorce Court and Bankruptcy Buildings, Carey Street. Many of the beautiful sixteenth century stained glass windows in Lincoln's Inn Chapel were smashed by a third. A fourth damaged Gray's Inn Hall.

But nowhere, in all the areas visited by the five airships that night—Hythe, Hertford and Croydon among them—was death and destruction worse than in the Strand.



L.N.A.

FORGING IRON RATIONS!

The British Tommy, wherever he found himself in the Great War, displayed a remarkable adroitness in making the best of a bad job and using his ingenuity to lighten the hardness and drabness of daily life while on service. In cooking his food in divers ways to relieve the monotony of daily rations, he became something of a master, resorting to such means as have these farriers, who are changing " cold tack " into something hot by means of their blacksmith's forge.



MAKING THE BEST OF BULLY BEEF AND SPUDS

At this field kitchen in France the irrepressible good humour of the men at the front is again illustrated. On the rough shelter the same old rations appear as a French menu, but as the courses are painted on the boards it does not appear that the chef sees much chance of offering a change of dishes day by day. Men of the R.E. and the R.A.M.C. are awaiting their turn to draw rations, while the Scottish soldier will no doubt share his with the pet he has picked up.



BEFORE THE DAYS OF DEEP DUG-OUTS

In the earlier days of the Great War some forward positions included the wreckage of houses, as shown here, which, with sandbags stacked high, gave reasonable cover and concealment for observers and the men moving into and out of the line. But, as the conflict grew, the hideous might of the guns razed and obliterated such vantage points, driving the combatants on both sides below the surface of the earth into trenches and deep dug-outs.



Daily Mirror

ALL LONDON MEN KNEW THE 'TOWER BRIDGE' AT LOOS

In the midst of Loos there stood this giant steel structure, which carried the winding gear of a mine. For miles around the towers and gantries, nicknamed by the men of London "The Tower Bridge" and "The Crystal Palace," were visible, and when the great battle of Loos opened on September 25, 1915, they served as a guiding point for the British infantrymen as they thrust forward in the cold light of dawn. They are seen again as they appeared during various periods of the offensive in the photographs in page 464.

SECTION XIV

Loos: Ill-starred Offensive

Sept. 25 — Oct. 19, 1915

ON September 25, 1915, there was launched one of the bloodiest and most costly battles of the war against the German positions at Loos. Full of high hopes and supported by a strong preliminary bombardment, the British troops advanced to the assault, but in the end achieved little in return for a casualty list of approximately 2,000 officers and 50,000 men. ¶ This sad episode is described by the famous war correspondent, Sir Philip Gibbs, who saw the massing of the troops in the back areas, and by those who followed and shared their fortunes in the field: Mr. John Easton and three eminent writers known to a great post-War public, Mr. Patrick Macgill, Mr. Robert Graves, and "F.O.O." (Mr John Rhode). ¶ Before the embers of this battle had died down the civilized world was shocked by the news of the shooting of Nurse Cavell. His vain pleas for mercy are here recounted by the American Minister in Brussels, Mr. Brand Whitlock. ¶ The section ends on a more peaceful note with the story of a very temporary armistice at Christmas 1915, by Mr. Wilfred Ewart.

* 86 September 1915

PRELUDE to LOOS TRAGEDY

From Café to Ditch of Death

by Sir Philip Gibbs, K.B.E.

THE movements of troops and the preparations for big events revealed to every British soldier in France the "secret" of the coming battle. Casualty clearing-stations were ordered to make ready for big numbers of wounded. That was always one of the first signs of approaching massacre.

Vast quantities of shells were being brought up to the railheads and stacked in the "dumps." They were the first fruit of the speeding-up of munition factories at home after the public outcry against shell-shortage and the lack of high-explosives. Well, at last the guns would not be starved. There was enough high-explosive force available to blast the German trenches off the map. So it seemed to our innocence—though years afterwards we knew that no bombardment would destroy all earthworks, such as Germans made, and that always machine-guns would slash our infantry advancing over the chaos of mangled ground.

BEHIND our lines in France, in scores of villages where our men were quartered, there was a sense of impending fate. Soldiers of the New Army knew that in a little while the lessons they had learnt in the school of courage would be put to a more frightful test than that of holding trenches in stationary warfare. Their boredom, the intolerable monotony of that routine life, would be broken by more sensational drama; and some of them were glad of that and said: "Let's get on with it. Anything rather than that deadly stagnation." And others, who guessed they were chosen for the coming battle, and had a clear vision of what kind of things would happen (they knew something about the losses at Neuve Chapelle and Festubert), became more thoughtful than usual, deeply introspective, wondering how many days of life they had left to them.

Life was good out of the line in that September of 1915. The land of France was full of beauty, with bronzed corn-stooks in the fields, and scarlet poppies in the grass; and a golden sunlight on old barns, and on little white churches, and in orchards heavy with fruit. It was good to go into the garden of a French château and pluck a rose and smell its sweetness, and think back to England, where other roses were blooming. England! . . . And in a few days—who could say?—perhaps eternal sleep somewhere near Lens.

GRIM HUMOUR OF WAR

SOME officers of the Guards came into the garden of the little house where I lived at that time with other onlookers. It was an untidy garden, with a stretch of grass-plot too rough to be called a lawn, but with pleasant shade under the trees, and a "potager" with raspberries and currants on the bushes, and flower-beds where red and white roses dropped their petals.

Two officers of the Scots Guards, inseparable friends, came to gossip with us, and read the papers, and drink a little whisky in the evenings, and pick the raspberries. They were not professional soldiers. One of them had been a stockbroker, the other "something in the City." They disliked the Army system with an undisguised hatred and contempt. They hated war with a ferocity which was only a little "camouflaged" by the irony and the brutality of their anecdotes of war's little comedies. They took a grim delight in the humour of corpses, lice, bayonet-work, and the sniping of fair-haired German boys. They laughed, almost excessively, at these attributes of warfare, and one of them used to remark, after some such anecdote: "And once I was a little gentleman!" He was a gentleman still with a love of Nature in his heart—I saw him touch the petals of living roses with a caress in his finger-tips . . .

OTHER officers of the Guards came into the garden—Grenadiers. There were two young brothers of an old family who had always sent their sons to war. They looked absurdly young when they took off their tunics and played a game of cricket, with a club for a bat, and a tennis-ball. They were just schoolboys, but with the gravity of men who knew that life is short. I watched their young athletic figures so clean-limbed, so full of grace, as they threw the ball; and had a vision of them lying mangled.

An Indian prince came into the garden. It was Ranjitsinhji, who had carried his bat to many a pavilion where English men and women had clapped their hands to him, on glorious days when there was sunlight on English lawns. He took the club and stood at the wicket and was bowled third ball by a man who had only played cricket after ye manner of Stratford-atte-Bow. But then he found himself, handled the club like a sword, watched the ball with a falcon's eye, played with it. He was on the Staff of the Indian Cavalry Corps.

They went out into the darkness of the village lane. Battalions were already on the move, in the night. Their steady tramp of feet beat on the hard road. Their dark figures looked like an army of ghosts. Sparks were spluttering out of the funnels of Army cookers. A British soldier in full field-kit was kissing a woman in the shadow-world



TOWN OF MANY HAPPY MEMORIES

Béthune was one of the towns close behind the Allied line that remained habitable through most of the war years, and, as described in this chapter, many a British soldier found in its cafés a few hours of happy relief from the horrors of the trenches. In the German advance of March 1918 Béthune was heavily shelled and much of it destroyed, but it was never taken. This photograph shows Béthune as it is today, with the belfry, remembered by thousands of men, restored and no longer obscured by surrounding houses.

Photo A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

of an estaminet. I passed close to them, almost touching them, before I was aware of their presence.

" Bonne chance ! " said the woman. " Quand tu reviens——"

" One more kiss, lassie," said the man.

" Mais comme tu es gourmand, toi ! "

He kissed her savagely, hungrily. Then he lurched off the side-walk and formed up with other men in the darkness.

THE Scots Guards moved next morning. I stood by the side of the colonel, who was in a gruff mood.

" It looks like rain," he said, sniffing the air. " It will probably rain like hell when the battle begins."

I think he was killed somewhere by Fosse 8. The two comrades in the Scots Guards were badly wounded. One of the young brothers was killed and the other maimed. I found their names in the casualty lists which filled columns of " The Times " for a long time after Loos.

The town of Béthune was the capital of our Army in the Black Country of the French coalfields. It was not much shelled in those days, though afterwards—years afterwards—it was badly damaged by long-range guns, so that its people fled, at last, after living so long on the edge of war.

Its people were friendly to our men, and did not raise their prices exorbitantly. There were good shops in the town—" as good as Paris," said soldiers who had never been to Paris but found these plate-glass windows dazzling after trench life and loved to see the " mamzelles " behind the counters and walking out, smartly, with little high-heeled shoes. There were tea-shops, crowded always with officers on their way to the line or just out of it, and they liked to speak French with the girls who served them. Those girls saw the hunger in those men's eyes, who watched every movement they made, who tried to touch their hands and their frocks in passing. They knew they were desired, as daughters of Eve, by boys who were starved of love. They took that as part of their business, distributing cakes and buns without favour, with laughter in their eyes, and a merry word or two.

Now and then, when they had leisure, they retired to inner rooms, divided by curtains from the shop, and sat on the knees of young British officers while others played ragtime or sentimental ballads on untuned pianos.

There was champagne as well as tea to be had in these bun-shops, but the A.P.M. was down on disorder or riotous gaiety, and there were no orgies. " Pas d'orgies," said the young lady severely, when things were getting a little too lively. They had to think of their business.

DOWN side-streets here and there were houses where other women lived not so severe in their point of view. Their business, indeed, did not permit of severity, and they catered for the hunger of men exiled year after year from their own home life and from decent womanhood. They gave the base counterfeit of love in return for a few francs, and there were long lines of men, English, Irish and Scottish soldiers, who waited their turn to get that vile imitation of life's romance from women who were bought and paid for.

The inhabitants of Béthune, the shopkeepers, and brave little families of France, and bright-eyed girls, and frowzy women, and heroines and harlots came out into the streets before the battle of Loos, and watched the British Army pouring through—battalions of Londoners and Scots, in full fighting kit, with hot sweat on their faces, and grim eyes, and endless columns of field-guns and limbers, drawn by hard-mouthed mules cursed and thrashed by their drivers, and ambulances, empty now, and wagons, and motor-lorries; hour after hour and day after day.

. . . . . .

"'Cré nom de Dieu!" said French peasants . . . in villages like Gouy, Servins, Heuchin, Houdain, Grenay, Bruay, and Pernes. "The cauldron is boiling up . . . There will be a fine pot-au-feu."

. . . . . .

In those villages—Heuchin, Houdain, Lillers and others—on the edge of the Black Country the Scottish troops of the 15th Division were in training for the arena, practising attacks on trenches and villages, getting a fine edge of efficiency on to bayonet-work and bombing, and having their morale heightened by addresses from Brigadiers and Divisional Commanders on the glorious privilege which was about to be theirs of leading the assault, and on the joys as well as the duty of killing Germans. . . .

It was the first big attack of the 15th Division. They were determined to go fast and go far. Their pride of race was stronger than the strain on their nerves. Many of them, I am certain, had no sense of fear, no apprehension of death or wounds. Excitement, the comradeship of courage, the rivalry of battalions, lifted them above anxiety before the battle began, though here and there men . . . of more delicate fibre, of imagination as well as courage, must have stared in great moments at the grisly spectre towards whom they would soon be walking.

HONOUR FOR THE NEW ARMY

In other villages were battalions of the 47th London Division. They, too, were to be in the first line of attack, on the right of the Scots. They, too, had to win honour for the New Army, and old London. They were a different crowd from the Scots, not so hard, not so steel-nerved, with more sensibility to suffering, more imagination, more instinctive revolt against the butchery that was to come. But they, too, had been "doped" for morale, their nervous tension had been tightened up by speeches addressed to their spirit and tradition.

It was to be London's day out. They were to fight for the glory of the old town . . . the old town where they had lived in little suburban houses with flower gardens, where they had gone up by the early morning trains to City offices and Government offices, and warehouses and shops, in days before they ever guessed they would go a-soldiering, and crouch in shell-holes under high explosives, and thrust sharp steel into German bowels. But they would do their best. They would go through with it. They would keep their sense of humour and make Cockney jokes at death. They would show the stuff of London pride.

"Domine dirige nos!"

. . . . . .

I watched the preliminary bombardment of the Loos battlefields from a black slag-heap beyond Noeux-les-Mines, and afterwards went on to the battle-ground up to the Loos Redoubt, when our guns and the enemy's were hard at work, and later still, in years that followed, when there was never a silence of the guns in those fields, came to know the ground from many points of view.

It was a hideous territory, this Black Country between Lens and Hulluch. From the flat country below the distant ridges of Notre Dame de Lorette and Vimy there rose a number of high, black cones made by the refuse of the coal mines, which were called Fosses. Around those black mounds there was great slaughter, as at Fosse 8 and Fosse 10 and Puits 14 bis, and the Double Crassier near Loos, because they gave observation and were important to

TRAINED TO THE LAST MINUTE

In this page Sir Philip Gibbs describes the intensive training which the Scottish troops of the 15th Division underwent before being flung into the battle of Loos. The photograph shows a Scottish regiment marching through a village to concentrate for the battle, headed by a couple of pipers. During the battle of Loos the British losses were over 50,000, of whom nearly 16,000 were killed or missing. The Scottish Division suffered very heavily.

Imperial War Museum







A DEAD TOWN FOR SEVEN YEARS

Lens was a prosperous manufacturing town and the centre of an important mining district in 1914, but there was constant fighting around it and it was gradually reduced to ruins. It was not until the coal mines began to work again in 1921, seven years after the Germans first entered the town, that prosperity returned to it. Above, left, is the Church of St Leger, completely restored, and, right, the new railway station, one of the proudest stations today in Northern France.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

capture or hold. Near them were the pit-heads with winding-gear in elevated towers of steel which were smashed and twisted by gun fire ; and in Loos itself were two of those towers joined by steel girders and gantries, called the " Tower Bridge " by men of London.

Rows of red cottages where the French miners had lived were called " corons," and where they were grouped into larger units they were called " cités," like the Cité St. Auguste, the Cité St. Pierre, and the Cité St. Laurent, beyond Hill 70, on the outskirts of Lens [see map in page 468].

All those places were abandoned now by black-grimed men who had fled down the mine-shaft and galleries with their women and children, and had come up on our side of the lines at Noeux-les-Mines or Bruay or Bully-Grenay, where they still lived close to the war. Shells pierced the roof of the church in that squalid village of Noeux-les-Mines and smashed some of the cottages and killed some of the people now and then.

LATER in the war, when aircraft dropped bombs at night, a new peril overshadowed them with terror, and they lived in their cellars after dusk, and sometimes were buried there. But they would not retreat farther back—not many of them—and on days of battle I saw groups of French miners and dirty-bloused girls excited by the passage of our troops, and by the walking wounded who came stumbling back, and by stretcher cases unloaded from ambulances to the floors of their dirty cottages. High-velocities fell in some of the streets, shrapnel shells whined overhead and burst like thunder-claps. Young hooligans of France slouched around with their hands in their pockets, talking to our men in a queer lingua-franca, grimacing at those noises if they did not come too near.

I saw lightly wounded girls among them, with bandaged heads and hands, but they did not think that a reason for escape. With smoothly braided hair they gathered round British soldiers in steel hats, and clasped their arms or leaned against their shoulders. They had known many of those men before. They were their sweethearts. In those foul little mining towns the British troops had liked their billets, because of the girls there. London boys and Scots " kept company " with pretty slatterns, who stole their badges for keepsakes and taught them a base patois of French, and had a smudge of tears on their cheeks when the boys went away for a spell in the ditches of death. They



SURE-FOOTED BUT SOUR-TEMPERED L.N.A.

Tribute has been paid in earlier chapters to the faithfulness and courage of the army horses, but of the mules there is a different story to tell. Their great redeeming quality was their sure-footedness. The mule above is typical of the hard-mouthed beasts which Sir Philip Gibbs says were sworn at and thrashed by their drivers, an attitude easily understandable when a display of mulish obstinacy took place in the heat of battle.

were kindhearted little sluts, with astounding courage.

"Aren't you afraid of this place?" I asked one of them in Bully-Grenay when it was "unhealthy" there. "You might be killed here any minute."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Je m'en fiche de la mort!" (I don't care a damn about death.) I had the same answer from other girls in other places. . . .

THAT was the mise-en-scène of the battle of Loos—those mining towns behind the lines, then a maze of communication trenches entered from a place called Philosophe, leading up to the trench-lines beyond Vermelles, and running northwards to Cambrin and Givenchy opposite Hulluch, Haisnes and La Bassée, where the enemy had their trenches and earthworks among the slag-heaps, the pitheads, the "corons" and the "cités," all broken by gunfire, and nowhere a sign of human life above ground in which many men were hidden.

Storms of gunfire broke loose from our batteries a week before the battle. It was our first demonstration of those stores of high-explosive shells which had been made by the speeding-up of munition work in England and of a gun power which had been growing steadily since the coming out of the New Army. The weather was heavy with mist and a drizzle of rain. Banks of smoke made a pall over all the arena of war, and it was stabbed and torn by the incessant flash of bursting shells.

I stood on the slag-heap staring at this curtain of smoke hour after hour, dazed by the tumult of noise and by that impenetrable veil which hid all human drama. There was no movement of men to be seen, no slaughter, no heroic episode—only through rifts in the smoke the blurred edges of slag-heaps and pitheads, and smoking ruins. German trenches were being battered in, German dug-outs made into the tombs of living men, German bodies tossed up with earth and stones—all that was certain but invisible.

"Very boring," said an officer at my side. "Not a damn thing to be seen."

"Our men ought to have a walk-over," said an optimist. "Any living German must be a gibbering idiot with shell-shock."

"I expect they're playing cards in their dug-outs," said the officer who was bored.

"Even high explosives don't go down very deep."

"It's stupendous, all the same. By God, hark at that! It seems more than human. It's like some convulsion of nature."

"There's no adventure in modern war," said the bored man. "It's a dirty, scientific business. I'd kill all chemists and explosive experts."

"Our men will have adventure enough when they go over the top at dawn. Hell must be a game compared with that."

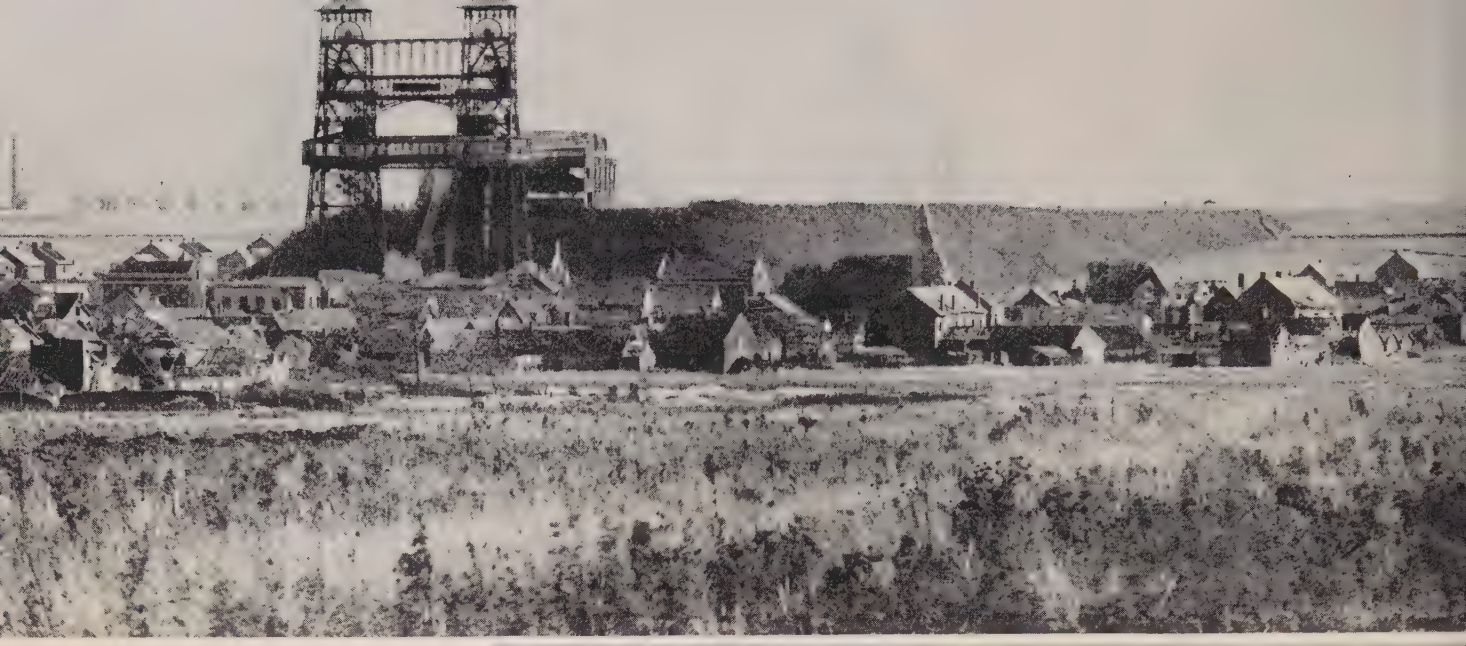
The guns went on pounding away day after day—labouring, pummelling, hammering, like Thor with his thunderbolts. It was the preparation for battle. No men were out of the trenches yet, though some were being killed there and elsewhere, at the cross-roads by Philosophe, and outside the village of Masingarbe, and in the ruins of Vermelles. The German guns were answering back intermittently, but holding most of their fire until human flesh came out into the open. The battle began at dawn on September 25.

THIS WAS A PLACE TO BE AFRAID OF

This is the main street in Bully-Grenay, the village which is described in this page as "unhealthy," but where courageous young Frenchwomen defied death and parted with tears from the British soldiers who went out from there to fight. On the right is an advanced dressing station, sandbagged against enemy shell fire.

Imperial War Museum





LANDMARK OF LOOS

THEN AND NOW

In the early days of the battle of Loos the famous "Tower Bridge," seen also in page 458, still stood amidst a hurricane of shells, but it was finally reduced to a mass of tangled girders. Above is the village and pithead before the battle began, and right is the structure which replaced it after the war. It is necessary to introduce here, for the sake of comparison only, the photograph below (which also appeared in "World War"), for it is the only one existing which shows the village completely wrecked, with the "Tower Bridge" but slightly damaged. It was taken on September 25, 1915.

Photos, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd., and Imperial War Museum





WITH the GUNS at LOOS

by 'F. O. O.' (Major C. J. C. Street)

THE initials F.O.O. stand for Forward Observation Officer of the artillery, and in this instance disguise the identity of a famous detective writer, Mr. John Rhode, which is the nom de plume of Major C. J. C. Street. The forward observation officer held a position of great danger and responsibility, and the author here tells his story of the preliminary bombardment before the battle of Loos. Every reader must be impressed by the vivid account which he gives of the urgency of the task of the gunners on the eve of this disastrous battle

THAT night [Sept. 24, 1915] was the lull before the storm. All along our line the restless field guns woke but fitfully, as a watch-dog to bark at the moon, and then fell off to sleep again. Even the incomparable French "soixante-quinzes" on our right, whose voices are hushed neither by day nor by night, seemed restless, impatient, restrained, keeping long silences, until in sheer desperation they burst into uncontrollable passion, ceasing again as suddenly as they began, as though appalled by their own act. Only the vivid lights soared brilliantly as ever above the trenches, failing, however, to evoke the usual salutation from their unsleeping wardens. So the morning dawned, unheralded by the noisy "morning hate" with which the opposing armies invariably greeted one another, the still air seeming to cower silently, awaiting the shocks that were to come. . . .

So as the day passes on we fall into our usual routine. The battery is seemingly uninhabited but for the strident section commanders standing between their hidden guns, except when reliefs descend into the pits as into Avernus, out of which presently appear a knot of men, dusty, grimy, and incredibly thirsty. . . .

All the time, at regular intervals, the guns fire and the orders pass. Sometimes a keener note is heard, "Left section, cease loading! Fresh target—" and a new string of orders, soon followed by a resumption of the periodic roaring, as of a thunderstorm controlled by an angel with a stop-watch. Or perhaps "Fire No. 3 gun!" and no instant report. "What's the matter, No. 3?" "Miss-fire, sir!" "All right, look sharp!" "All ready, sir!" "Fire No. 3, then!" and the rhythm commences again.

After a time it all has a strangely soothing effect on the senses. First one loses the din of the surrounding batteries, then fails to notice the report of one's own guns a few feet away, giving orders mechanically notwithstanding. Perhaps a stifled yawn and a glance at the watch—is that infernal fellow never coming to relieve me? Then the warning voice of the telephonist, "Fresh target coming through, sir!" and the wandering attention leaps into watchfulness again.

Up at the observation post things are very different. There the observing officer sits, watching the black and yellow smoke clouds of the bursting high explosive, or the cotton-wool-like puffs of the shrapnel. "No. 1 fired, sir!" The words of the telephonists seem to come as from some other world. Here she comes, far away behind, the whistle of the shell shrieking louder as she passes right overhead—splendid! in the very trench itself; see the black smoke spread out and rise slowly from a long section of trench, while the green vegetation grows white with the falling chalk. No correction can be made to that, "No. 1, repeat!" "No 2 fired, sir!" Here she comes, ah, a little to the right—"No. 2, ten minutes more left, fire!"

ENEMY TRENCH DISAPPEARS

So it goes on, until this particular section of trench has practically disappeared, leaving only a white scar. Then a change of target and a repetition of the destruction. A fascinating business this on so fine an autumn day, so fascinating that all sense of time is lost, all conjecture as to whether the enemy will take it into his head to select our observation post as a target is forgotten. The only thing in the world is the measured fall of the shell and the swift framing of the consequent order, the only pleasure the deep satisfaction of a well-placed round, the only despair the haunting memory of a shot wasted that might have been saved by a different procedure.

During those four days of ceaseless bombardment, the enemy made very little reply except at certain points; we subsequently discovered why. He made no attempt to distribute his fire along our front line, nor did he make a systematic search for our observation posts, the vital organ of every battery and its most vulnerable one. Certain spots he selected, and with magnificent gunnery rendered them utterly untenable. Shell after shell fell with mathematical accuracy into Vermelles, Le Rutoire, Quality Street, but when once we had learnt these favoured spots, our casualties were very few, being avoided by the simple expedient of removing to places that appeared to be more suitable in the capacity of health-resorts, or, where that was impossible, taking to the cellars and remaining there. . . .

THE material effect of such a bombardment is harder to judge, for it must be remembered that, despite the high science of modern gunnery, the percentage of direct hits upon a given objective is still comparatively small. When, however, a heavy shell detonates under favourable conditions, its destructive power is enormous. For instance, on the third day I saw a direct hit by one of our largest howitzers upon the boiler-house of Puits XVI. The shell penetrated the roof and burst inside the building, sending up an enormous cloud of black smoke tinged with the pink of pulverized brick, that hung for several minutes. When it cleared, nothing but a gaunt and twisted framework of steel girders remained, a heap of rubbish alone showing where the walls had stood.

A smaller howitzer was ordered to fell a brick wall, some thirty feet high and many courses thick. The shell burst in regular sequence at its foot, at roughly ten yards interval, each round bringing down an equivalent section of the wall, until nothing remained but a long pile of smoking rubble. And more impressive, perhaps, than all is the sight of a medium lyddite shell bursting in a narrow trench.

Out of the centre of a vivid flash fly heavy timbers, sandbags, revetments, all that once formed the trench, sometimes the mangled fragments of its occupants, while to right and left rolls the choking smoke, driving its way into the deepest dug-outs, overcoming men many yards away from the point of impact, spreading death in every form. Is it to be wondered at that when our infantry reached these trenches they found a few survivors, living indeed still, but struggling and raving as the inmates of some ghastly Bedlam?

. . . . .

During the night of September 24–25, infantry patrols left the trenches to explore the condition of the enemy's



LOOS WAS A BLACK COUNTRY BATTLEFIELD

The battle of Loos, which lasted from September 25 to October 13, was fought amid the black country of north-eastern France, and Loos itself was a mining village. This photograph gives an excellent idea of the difficult ground on which the fighting took place. The slag heaps were obstacles difficult to overcome. The one on the right is a "tip" which was used as an observation post.

Imperial War Museum

wire entanglements, upon the destruction of which our field batteries had been engaged during the previous day. Artillery fire was therefore reduced as much as could be done with safety, and was chiefly directed upon reserves and billets, in order to reduce the chance of rounds falling short injuring the patrols.

During the evening the batteries opposed to us had shown far greater liveliness than they had hitherto. Possibly the enemy had got information as to where the decisive attack was to be made, as it seems to be the fact that owing to the four days' bombardment having taken place along the whole of the British front, they had hitherto hesitated to reinforce any particular sector, but had kept their reserves in a state of immediate readiness at their various railway centres. If this was the case, it is very probable that during the 23rd and 24th fresh batteries were placed in position between Vendin-le-Vieil and Lens, and that these came into action on the afternoon and evening of the 24th. This supposition is borne out by the fact of the enemy's ability to bring a terrific fire to bear on Loos as soon as we entered it.

UNTIL the light failed, we had been busily engaged dropping shell along the Double Crassier, upon whose grim black crest the enemy were suspected of having mounted a number of machine guns. I had been in the observation post nearly the whole day—it is, by the way, worthy of remark as showing the immunity from retaliation that we had enjoyed in our sector, that we used to walk to and from our O.P. [Observation Post] at all hours of the day through country literally covered with batteries, none of whom up till now had suffered any casualties—but at about seven o'clock duty recalled me to the battery.

So absorbed had I been in the difficult business of observing in the failing light, that although I was conscious that shells were bursting all round, I had no idea that anything out of the ordinary was taking place until one of our telephonists, who had been out repairing the line, returned somewhat shaken, having been blown off his feet and thrown some distance by a high-explosive detonating close to him. His only complaint was that he had lost a pair of wire-cutters!

A VERY CLOSE SHAVE

HOWEVER, as soon as I started my walk homewards along the "Harrow Road," I found things still fairly lively. Several houses had been destroyed since the morning, and some very fine examples of shell-holes in the middle of the road added to the joys of the transport drivers, whose wagons of all descriptions were now beginning to pour along it. At one point a medium shell burst about twenty yards away from me—I had heard it coming and found friendly refuge in the ditch—and before the smoke had fairly cleared an armoured car and a motor cyclist orderly drove simultaneously into it from opposite directions. Nobody was hurt, but the road was most effectively obstructed, and the effect produced was exactly like that of a block in Piccadilly, including the language.

I reached the battery safely, to find that the shelling had not reached so far back, but that another form of excitement had supervened. We had received orders to be ready to move at the shortest possible notice, in case a general advance upon the morrow should render a change in our position necessary. Of course, we had been prepared for this for days, but even so this official pronouncement of our hopes sent a thrill through every one of us. This was, then, the decisive struggle, the Waterloo of the campaign at last!

MOVING a battery of heavy guns is, however, no small matter and one that involves a vast amount of labour, not to be lightly undertaken. A story is told of a certain major, distinguished alike for his capability and his piety, who, knowing from bitter experience the difficulties that attended a change of position of his battery, added on this night to his usual formula of prayer these heart-felt words, "O Lord, grant us victory in the coming struggle—but not in my sector!"

I think that despite the fact that the guns were silent for the first time since the beginning of the bombardment, very few of us slept much that night. Our schemes were perfect, certainly; every detail of our actions of the morrow had been long worked out, each phase starting a definite time after an empiric zero, which was now fixed for 5.50 a.m.

But—would the enemy consent to fall in with those schemes? Suppose they anticipated our offensive by an attack of their own? The wire in front of their trenches was already destroyed, even now our infantry were busy cutting wide passages through our own. How strong were they in reality? Was their passive endurance of our fire only a blind to lull us into security? These and a thousand other conjectures troubled our minds all night, and it was with a deep feeling of relief that we stood in the battery, no untoward incident having marred our plans, at 5.30 a.m. on the 25th—the eagerly awaited Day Z!

Then were the scenes at the opening of the bombardment repeated. Along our line all was again quiet, only from

our right came the distant echoes of the fighting round Souchez and the Labyrinth, a deep roar that had now been continuous for over a week. Again we sit in the telephone dug-out, tense and expectant. "Official time coming, sir!" Watches are taken out in readiness. "Five thirty-five—now!" Quarter of an hour to go! One by one we creep out to see for the last time that all is ready. One minute more—"Hook your lanyards!"—the hand ticks round—time zero—"Fire!"

This was no deliberate bombardment, every gun must in the short interval allowed it work to its utmost capacity, every man sweating in the dust-laden pits must toil as he never toiled before to feed it; into the luckless trenches in front of us must pour such a blasting hurricane of fire that the resistance prepared for our attack shall wither away in its deadly breath. But soon our own troops will be pouring out of their trenches, charging over the dividing ground to hurl themselves upon the trenches into which our wrath is now being poured, and then our fire must be lifted lest we do more harm than good.

ALL is arranged for in the time-table. At forty minutes past zero, or 6.30 a.m., every battery lifts its fire from the front line to the second line, and still the furious fire continues. But now we know that the blow is being struck—what would we all not give to be in action in the open as in old days, so that we could see the assault, watch the joining of the battle? . . . . And then suddenly came time zero, bringing with it a scene that could never be forgotten.

From the whole length of our front trench, as far as the eye could reach, rose, vertically at first, a grey cloud of smoke and gas, that, impelled by a gentle wind, spread slowly towards the enemy's trenches, very soon enveloping the whole of our range of vision in its opaque veil. This was our view of the assault, this dismal vapour the aura that was to surround a thousand sacrifices, the cloak that was to hide a thousand gallant deeds, the winding-sheet that was to enwrap so many a hero.

Modern war holds no dramatic spectacles . . . . Yet none the less is its fascination omnipotent; its magnetic attraction, that draws into its vortex every man that owns a soul to plague him, is none the less irresistible; its influence still has the power to weld a chain of heroes out of a dirty, blasphemous, footsore crowd of sinners.



MAN OF MANY PARTS

Before he joined the Army in 1914 Mr. Patrick Macgill had been a navvy and a farm worker and a research student, and had moreover by then established a growing reputation as an author.

* 88 September 25, 1915

The HORROR that was LOOS . . .

And I Saw a Football in No Man's Land

by Patrick Macgill

THE author of "Children of the Dead End" and other well-known works, Patrick Macgill, was a stretcher-bearer in the London Irish Rifles at the battle of Loos. This account of his experiences was written at the time with all the power of an inspired writer describing an immediate journey into the land of blood and horror. He tells the famous story of how his comrades went over the top with a football

IT was now grey day, hazy and moist, and the thick clouds of pale yellow smoke curled high in space and curtained the dawn off from the scene of war. The word was passed along. "London Irish lead on to assembly trench." The assembly trench was in front, and there the scaling ladders were placed against the parapet, ready steps to death, as someone remarked. I had a view of the men swarming up the ladders when I got there, their bayonets held in steady hands, and at a little distance off a football swinging by its whang from a bayonet standard.

The company were soon out in the open marching forward. The enemy's guns were busy, and the rifle and Maxim bullets ripped the sandbags. The infantry fire was wild but of slight intensity. The enemy could not see the attacking party. But, judging by the row, it was hard to think that men could weather the leaden storm in the open.

The big guns were not so vehement now, our artillery had no doubt played havoc with the hostile batteries . . . I went to the foot of a ladder and got hold of a rung. A soldier in front was clambering across. Suddenly he dropped backwards and bore me to the ground; the bullet caught him in the forehead. I got to my feet to find a stranger in grey uniform coming down the ladder. He reached the floor of the trench, put up his hands when I looked at him, and cried in a weak, imploring voice, "Kamerad! Kamerad!"

"A German!" I said to my mate.

"H'm, h'm!" he answered.

I flung my stretcher over the parapet and, followed by my comrade stretcher-bearer, I clambered up the ladder and went over the top . . .

The moment had come when it was unwise to think. The country round Loos was like a sponge; the god of war had stamped with his foot on it, and thousands of men, armed, ready to kill, were squirted out on to the level, barren fields of danger. To dwell for a moment on the novel position of being standing where a thousand deaths swept by, missing you by a mere hair's-breadth, would be sheer folly. There on the open field of death my life was out of my keeping, but the sensation of fear never entered my being. There was so much simplicity and so little effort in doing what I had done, in doing what eight hundred comrades had done, that I felt I could carry through the work before me with as much credit as my code of self-respect required.

The Maxims went crackle like dry brushwood under the feet of a marching host. A bullet passed very close to my face like a sharp, sudden breath; a second hit the ground in front, flicked up a little shower of dust, and ricochetted





THE BATTLEFIELD OF LOOS

The top photograph gives a panoramic view of that part of the battlefield of Loos which lies between Loos and Lens, while above is a contour map of the whole battlefield.

to the left, hitting the earth many times before it found a resting place. The air was vicious with bullets; a million invisible birds flicked their wings very close to my face. Ahead the clouds of smoke, sluggish low-lying fog, and fumes of bursting shells, thick in volume, receded towards the German trenches, and formed a striking background for the soldiers who were marching up a low slope towards the enemy's parapet, which the smoke still hid from view.

There was no haste in the forward move, every step was taken with regimental precision, and twice on the way across the Irish boys halted for a moment to correct their alinement. Only at a point away on the right there was some confusion and a little irregularity. Were the men wavering? No fear! The boys on the right were dribbling the elusive football towards the German trench.

RAISING the stretcher, my mate and I went forward. For the next few minutes I was conscious of many things. A slight rain was falling; the smoke and fumes I saw had drifted back, exposing a dark streak on the field of green, the enemy's trench. A little distance away from me three men hurried forward, and two of them carried a box of rifle ammunition. One of the bearers fell flat to earth, his two mates halted for a moment, looked at the stricken boy, and seemed to puzzle at something. Then they caught hold of the box hangers and rushed forward. The man on the ground raised himself and looked after his mates, then sank down again to the wet ground.

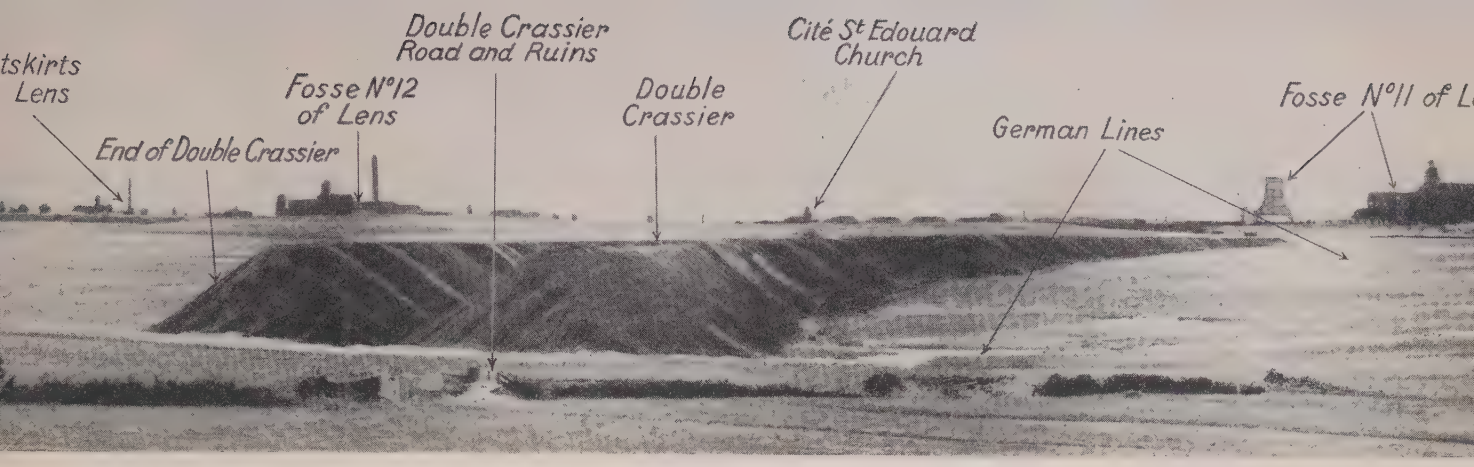
Another soldier came crawling towards us on his belly, looking for all the world like a gigantic lobster which had escaped from its basket. His lower lip was cut clean to the chin and hanging apart; blood welled through the muddy khaki trousers where they covered the hips.

I recognized the fellow.

"Much hurt, matey?" I asked.

"I'll manage to get in," he said.

"Shall I put a dressing on?"



"I'll manage to get into our own trench," he stammered, spitting the blood from his lips. "There are others out at the wire. S—— has caught it bad. Try and get him in, Pat."

"Right, old man," I said, as he crawled off. "Good luck."

My cap was blown off my head as if by a violent gust of wind, and it dropped on the ground. I put it on again, and at that moment a shell burst near at hand and a dozen splinters sang by my ear. I walked forward with a steady step.

"What took my cap off?" I asked myself. "It went away just as if it was caught in a breeze. God!" I muttered, in a burst of realization. "It was that shell passing." I breathed very deeply, my blood rushed down to my toes and an airy sensation filled my body. Then the stretcher dragged.

"Lift the damned thing up," I called to my mate over my shoulder. There was no reply. I looked round to find him gone, either mixed up in a whooping rush of kilted Highlanders, who had lost their objective and were now charging parallel to their own trench, or perhaps he got killed. . . . How strange that the Highlanders could not charge in silence, I thought, and then recollected that most of my boyhood friends, Donegal lads, were in Scottish regiments. . . . I placed my stretcher on my shoulder, walked forward towards a bank of smoke, and came across our platoon sergeant and part of his company.

"ARE we going wrong, or are the Jocks wrong?" he asked his men, then shouted, "Lie flat, boys, for a minute, until we see where we are. There's a big crucifix in Loos churchyard, and we've got to draw on that."

The men threw themselves flat; the sergeant went down on one knee and leant forward on his rifle, his hands on the bayonet standard, the fingers pointing upwards and the palms pressed close to the sword which was covered with rust. . . . How hard it would be to draw it from a dead body! . . The sergeant seemed to be kneeling in prayer. . . In front the cloud cleared away, and the black crucifix standing over the graves of Loos became revealed.

"Advance, boys!" said the sergeant. "Steady on to the foot of the Cross and rip the swine out of their trenches."

The Irish went forward. . . .

A shell struck the ground in front, burrowed, and failed to explode.

Men and pieces of men were lying all over the place. A leg, an arm, then again a leg, cut off at the hip. A finely formed leg, the latter, gracefully putteed. A dummy leg in a tailor's window could not be more graceful. It might be X; he was an artist in dress, a Beau Brummel in khaki. Fifty yards farther along I found the rest of X. . . .

The harrowing sight was repellent, antagonistic to my mind. The tortured things lying at my feet were symbols of insecurity, ominous reminders of danger from which no discretion could save a man. My soul was barren of pity; fear went down into the innermost parts of me, fear for myself. The dead and dying lay all around me; I felt a vague obligation to the latter; they must be carried out. But why should I trouble! Where could I begin? Everything was so far apart. I was too puny to start my labours in such a derelict world. . . .

THE COCKNEY'S 'KAMERAD'

A FIGURE in grey, a massive block of Bavarian bone and muscle, came running towards me . . . and Bill Teake following him with a long bayonet.

"A prisoner!" yelled the boy on seeing me. "'Kamerad! Kamerad!' 'e shouted when I came up. Blimey! I couldn't stab 'im, so I took 'im prisoner. It's not 'arf a barney! . . . 'Ave yer got a fag ter spare?"

The Cockney came to a halt, reached for a cigarette, and lit it.

The German stood still, panting like a dog. "Double, Fritz! Double!" shouted the boy, sending a little puff of smoke through his nose. "Over to our trench you go! Grease along if yer don't want a bayonet in your——"

They rushed off, the German with hands in air, and Bill behind with his bayonet perilously close to the prisoner. There was something amusing in the incident, and I could not refrain from laughing. Then I got a whiff from a German gas-bomb which exploded near me, and I began spluttering and coughing. The irritation, only momentary, was succeeded by a strange humour. I felt as if walking on air, my head got light, and it was with difficulty that I kept my feet on earth. It would be so easy to rise into space and float away.

The sensation was a delightful one; I felt so pleased with myself, with everything. A wounded man lay on the ground, clawing the earth with frenzied fingers. In a vague way I remembered some ancient law which ordained me to assist a stricken man. But I could not do so now; the action would clog my buoyancy and that delightful feeling of freedom which permeated my being. Another soldier whom I recognized, even at a distance, by his pink-and-white bald pate, so often a subject for our jokes, reeled over the bloodstained earth, his eyes almost bursting from their sockets.

"You look bad," I said to him, with a smile. He stared at me drunkenly, but did not answer.

A MAN, mother-naked, raced round in a circle, laughing boisterously. The rags that would class him as a friend or foe were gone, and I could not tell whether he was an Englishman or a German. As I watched him an impartial bullet went through his forehead and he fell headlong to the earth. The sight sobered me . . . .

Up near the German wire I found our company postman sitting in a shell-hole, a bullet in his leg below the knee and an unlighted cigarette in his mouth.

"You're the man I want!" he shouted, on seeing me. And I fumbled in my haversack for bandages.

"No dressing for me yet," he said, with a smile. "There are others needing help more than I. What I want is a match." As I handed him my match-box a big, high-explosive shell flew over our heads and dropped fifty yards away in a little hollow where seven or eight figures in khaki lay prostrate, faces to

the ground. The shell burst and the wounded and dead rose slowly into air to a height of six or seven yards and dropped slowly again, looking for all the world like puppets worked by wires.

"This," said the postman, who had observed the incident, "is a solution of a question which diplomacy could not settle, I suppose. The last argument of kings is a damned sorry business."

By the German barbed wire entanglements were the shambles of war. Here our men were seen by the enemy for the first time that morning. Up till then the foe had fired erratically through the oncoming curtain of smoke; but when the cloud cleared away the attackers were seen advancing, picking their way through the wires which had been cut to little pieces by our bombardment. The Irish were now met with harrying rifle fire, deadly petrol bombs and hand grenades. Here I came across dead, dying and sorely wounded; lives maimed and finished, and all the romance and roving that makes up the life of a soldier gone for ever. Here, too, I saw, bullet-riddled, against one of the spider webs known as chevaux de frise, a limp lump of pliable leather, the football which the boys had kicked across the field.

A MAN BEYOND HOPE

I came across Flannery lying close to a barbed wire support, one arm round it as if in embrace. He was a clumsily built fellow, with queer, bushy eyebrows and a short, squat nose. His bearing was never soldierly, but on a march he could bear any burden and stick the job when more alert men fell out. He always bore himself, however, with a certain grace, due, perhaps, to a placid belief in his own strength. He never made friends; a being apart, he led a solitary life. Now he lay close to earth hugging an entanglement prop, and dying.

There was something savage in the expression of his face as he looked slowly round, like an ox under a yoke, on my approach. I knelt down beside him and cut his tunic with my scissors where a burnt hole clotted with blood showed under the kidney. A splinter of shell had torn part of the man's side away. All hope was lost for the poor soul.

"In much pain, chummy?" I asked.

"Ah. Christ! Yes, Pat," he answered. "Wife and two kiddies, too. Are we getting the best of it?"

I did not know how the fight was progressing, but I had seen a line of bayonets drawing near to the second trench out by Loos.

"Winning all along," I answered.

"That's good," he said. "Is there any hope for me?"

"Of course there is, matey," I lied. "You have two of these morphia tablets and lie quiet. We'll take you in after a while, and you'll be back in England in two or three days' time."

I placed the morphia under his tongue and he closed his eyes as if going to sleep. Then, with an effort, he tried to get up and gripped the wire support with such vigour that it came clean out of the ground. His legs shot out from under him, and, muttering something about rations being fit for pigs and not men, he fell back and died.

The fighting was not over in the front trench yet, the first two companies had gone ahead, the other two companies were taking possession here. A sturdy Bavarian in shirt and pants was standing on a banquette with his bayonet over the parapet, and a determined look in his eyes. He had already done for two of our men as they tried to cross, but now his rifle seemed to be unloaded and he waited. Standing there amid his dead countrymen he formed a striking figure. A bullet from one of our rifles would have ended his career speedily, but no one seemed to want to fire that shot. There was a moment of suspense, broken only when the monstrous futility of resistance became apparent to him, and he threw down his rifle and put up his hands, shouting "Kamerad! Kamerad!" I don't know what became of him afterwards.

Four boys rushed up, panting under the machine-gun and ammunition belts which they carried. One got hit and fell to the ground, the Maxim tripod which he carried fell on top of him. The remainder of the party came to a halt.

"Lift the tripod and come along," his mates shouted to one another.

"Who's goin' to carry it?" asked a little fellow with a box of ammunition.

"You," came the answer.

"Some other one must carry it," said the little fellow. "I've the heaviest burden."

"You've not," one answered. "Get the blurry thing on your shoulder."

"Blurry yourself!" said the little fellow. "Someone else carry the thing. Marney can carry it!"

"I'm not a damned fool!" said Marney. "It can stick there 'fore I take it across."

"Not much good goin' over without it," said the little fellow.

I left them there wrangling; the extra weight would have made no appreciable difference to any of them.

It was interesting to see how the events of the morning had changed the nature of the boys. Mild-mannered youths who had spent their working hours of civil life in scratching with inky pens on white paper, and their hours of relaxation in cutting capers on roller skates and helping dainty maidens to teas and ices, became possessed of mad Berserker rage and ungovernable fury. Now that their work was war, the bloodstained bayonet gave them play in which they seemed to glory.

"Here's one that I've just done in," I heard M'Crone shout, looking approvingly at a dead German. "That's five of the bloody swine now."

HE SOON LEARNT TO SWEAR

M'Crone's mother never sends her son any money lest he gets into the evil habit of smoking cigarettes. He is of a religious turn of mind and delights in singing hymns, his favourite being, "There is a green hill far away." I never heard him swear before, but at Loos his language would make a navvy in a Saturday night taproom green with envy. M'Crone was not lacking in courage. I have seen him wait for death with untroubled front in a shell-harried trench, and now, inflicting pain on others, he was a fiend personified; such transformations are of common occurrence on the field of honour.

The German trench had suffered severely from our fire; parapets were blown in, and at places the trench was full to the level of the ground with sandbags and earth. Wreckage was strewn all over the place, rifles, twisted distortions of shapeless metal, caught by high-velocity shells, machine-guns smashed to atoms, bomb-proof shelters broken to pieces like houses of cards; giants had been at work of destruction.

On the reverse slope of the parapet, broken tins, rusty swords, muddy equipments, wicked-looking coils of barbed wire, and discarded articles of clothing were scattered about pell-mell. I noticed an unexploded shell perched on a sandbag, cocking a perky nose in air, and beside it was a battered helmet, the brass glory of its regal eagle dimmed with trench mud and wrecked with many a bullet . . .

I had a clear personal impression of man's ingenuity for destruction when my eyes looked on the German front line where our dead lay in peace with their fallen enemies on the parapet. At the bottom of the trench the dead lay thick, and our boys, engaged in building a new parapet, were heaping the sandbags on the dead men and consolidating the captured position.



THEY WERE CAUGHT IN THE OPEN

Here the tide of battle has swept on, leaving a trail of wreckage behind it. The scene is the Loos-Vermelles road looking towards Loos. On the left are the remains of the wrecked transport and machine-gun limbers of the 21st and 24th Divisions which were caught in the open and heavily shelled. On the extreme right can be seen the remains of an old German communication trench with the "knife-rest" type of barbed-wire entanglement such as is seen in page 486. Part of "Tower Bridge" (*see* page 458) is visible on the left.

Imperial War Museum

*89 September 27, 1915

LOOS: The HOPELESS MAZE of BATTLE

My Men Were Covered in Clay and Blood

by John Easton

THE author of this narrative, John Easton, was a second-lieutenant in the 12th Battalion Royal Fusiliers at the battle of Loos. Like many others who have written their war reminiscences, he has preferred to use the third person—disguising himself and his comrades under fictitious names. But the Broadchalk who is the author of this story pays magnificent tribute to their memory

AT first the din of the bursting shells drove the platoon into its funk-holes: the parapet shook, and chunks of earth fell down into the trench through the vibration. But soon it became apparent that there was little except noise to fear; the fuses were too short and the shrapnel was bursting too high: also the shells were made of very inferior stuff. Large chunks of a red-hot coke-like substance landed in the trench, and the men passed their time in seeing who could pick up the largest and hottest piece. One of these chunks landed on Broadchalk's head and hurt him less than a well-aimed clump of turf: another, a jagged piece of metal this time, tore a hole in the peak of his cap—a nastier customer altogether. . . .

THE remaining three hours before dawn were cheerless, cold and dreary. Broadchalk's eyelids were heavy; a misty drizzle of rain accentuated the cold; there was nothing to wait for now except the German attack. That it would succeed was out of the question; the main hope was that they would come thick and straight and in the open; there were too many damned obstacles on the left front. Every man acted as sentry unbidden. Broadchalk inspected rifles—for the damp clay tended to clog the bolts—and dropped a hint or two. "Aim low and pick your men; you've plenty of time. They can't rush you. If they look like reaching the wire, get out and go for them. Don't wait for orders."

He looked at his watch. It was half-past four. "Stand to!" he shouted. If only he had a machine-gun now. . . .

THEY came as large shadows in the grey mist that hung over the earth; they ran diagonally across the front, each man for himself; they ran as men who have never seen a running track; some in spiked helmets, some in fatigue caps; and they fell one by one. A fat man, hit in the leg, hopped back to their trenches with the help of a fatter friend, their arms entwined about each other's necks. A bullet hit the friend in the rear; he leaped into the air and bowled over his comrade.

Of that first line half-a-dozen reached the shelter of the houses and dropped into Corons Alley, a shallow trench on Trevor's [a fellow subaltern] left. The men had fired as one shoots at a fair, with yells of laughter and cheers—some firing from the shoulder.

ATTACKS SHOT TO NOTHING

AGAIN a second line; again that melting away, again half-a-dozen men reached the trench.

A third attack, shot to nothing before it had reached its own wire.

"Wouldn't you like a shot, sir?" asked Private Brig solemnly, offering his rifle.

Broadchalk, who had two fronts to watch and was jumping backwards and forwards in an attempt to miss nothing on either, shook his head with a smile.

"That's given them something to think about," he mused. He was worried about those dozen men who had reached the communication trench and could only hope that Trevor had got them.

"'Am an' eggs is what I'd like," said Private Millet. "And more heggs than 'am! Did yer see me 'it that fat 'Un in the bum?"

"I saw yer knock that bloody weather-cock off the church steeple."

"'And me the coffee, and keep yer thumb out of the saucer."

BROADCHALK moved down the line to see Morell (his company commander) and report. Things were not going too well on the left. Trevor's platoon had had the same success as Number Eight [platoon], but against that uncertain flank the Germans had attacked in great numbers, and it was impossible to judge to what extent they had been held up.

Broadchalk found Morell worried but cheery. "We'll get the guns on to those houses," he said. "I'll come along with you and see the Second in Command. Keep an eye out for snipers, and watch the windows of the houses." They worked their way back slowly, for the trench was narrow.

Ennis [a fellow subaltern] joined Broadchalk, and they sat side by side discussing the situation. The snipers were making the most of their chances. The two platoons of "A" Company had lost their only subaltern, shot through the head; Aubrey had been wounded between the eyes and had been taken back to the rear, temporarily blind.

As the morning dragged on things became hotter. The bombardment was incessant, and under its cover small parties of Germans made their way over towards the left flank, offering but a glimpse of a target. Men began to fall fast, though Number Eight bore charmed lives.

BY eleven o'clock the Germans had occupied a large stretch of trench between Trevor and the remnants of the Northants; they were separated from him only by a traverse of sandbags and earth which he had hastily thrown up and manned with the one Lewis gun available. And then the British guns opened, not on to the houses, nor on that stretch of trench occupied by the Germans, but slap on to Trevor! They knocked his trench to pieces and decimated his platoon.

Sergeant-Major Bakewell, an old spindle-legged veteran regular from South Africa, set out alone for the rear to get into touch with the gunners and stop their havoc. When it was obvious that he had been hit, Ennis followed, making for the Dump, in the hope of finding an Observation Officer. Instead he found a major, sitting on a pile of slag, swearing softly under his breath. His eyes lit up at the sight of Ennis.

"Can you tell me where the 73rd Brigade are?" he asked. Ennis explained that he belonged to it.

"Thank God! I'm your new Brigadier, and I've just arrived." They moved off together.

By this time the right had been driven in: the Germans had seized Slag Alley and the frontal defences of the Dump.

Broadchalk, thrust forward like a wedge, with a range of sight less than two hundred yards all told, was oblivious of what was happening to right and left. He concentrated on keeping down the snipers, checking any advances across his field of fire, and repairing the havoc



HE PIPED THE REGIMENT TO VICTORY AND WON THE V.C. AT HILL 70

The very finest bravery was shown by Piper Daniel Laidlaw of the 7th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers during the attack on Hill 70. His regiment was severely gassed while waiting to open the attack, and, seeing the men were shaken, Piper Laidlaw mounted the parapet and marched up and down piping "Blue Bonnets over the Border," until he was wounded. The regiment rallied and charged forward like men inspired. Piper Laidlaw was awarded the V.C. He lives to tell the tale and still has his historic pipes. He figured prominently in the famous film of the Great War, "Forgotten Men." Left, he is seen in 1915 and below as he is today.

In the photograph at the foot of the page men of the 1st Welsh Guards are moving forward to the action at Hill 70 at which Piper Laidlaw won his V.C. On their way to Hill 70 they passed along the Vermelles Road seen in page 471.

Photos, Topical and Imperial War Museum





played by the German guns in his trenches. Things were getting more and more lively; there was no time to be tired, hungry or thirsty: they worked hard, getting ready for the great attack that seemed imminent.

The British guns had lifted. One great salvo landed full on a large house to Broadchalk's left front, and the whole front of it fell away like a theatre curtain, showing a solid wedge of German infantry, packed tight in each room like woodlice under an old plank. Another salvo sent them hurtling for their lives, jumping to the ground from the second storey.

BROADCHALK'S platoon emptied its magazines into them, for they had no cover, and few of them survived to crawl back into safety.

Into this medley of shrapnel and bullets Morell came running down the trench. "Get your men out, Mr. Broadchalk," he shouted. "You're cut off! Get those men out of that trench and make for the rear."

"A" Company, left officerless, looked up in bewilderment.

Broadchalk jumped on to the parapet. "You get those men out; I'll look after Number Eight," shouted Morell. "Come along, men, hurry up."

The appearance of Broadchalk was the signal for the German infantry to open fire: it was the first real target they had had. Behind him the walls spattered and hissed with the smack of bullets: he felt them whizz past his head and body. For fifty yards he ran, shouting to the men, hauling one up by the hand; then he cut suddenly through one of the houses and came into the garden beyond, almost tumbling into Morell, who was running between the houses with what men from Number Eight he had been able to collect.

THERE was no time to lose. The front German line was rushing over; the Germans on the left had driven in Trevor, and were racing to close the gap: from the Dump there came the slow relentless pop of the Hotchkiss.

At the corner of the houses they parted company. "Get back to the trenches behind the Dump and hold them at all costs," panted Morell. "I'll see if I can do anything over here." He ran off in the direction of the trenches that the Sussex had been holding in front of the Dump.

The machine-guns had cut "A" Company to pieces. The Second in Command, a sporting colonel of the old school who had retired before South Africa, was riddled with bullets as he cleared the men out of their trenches; Broadchalk, with the remnants, set out to thread the narrow neck of the bottle—a long strip of ground six hundred yards long—lined on one side by the Dump and on the other by the houses. The Germans were swarming; if they had thrown a line across the gap it would have been impossible to get through. A few rushed out from a house, but made off at the show of the bayonet; one fellow fired point-blank at Broadchalk from a doorway and missed him.

They ran and walked in spasms, keeping a semblance of a line, ready to turn if they were pursued. Somehow they slipped through the gap, and came out twenty strong. Broadchalk had a bullet through the heel of his boot and another through his cap; Sergeant Piper had gone, Private Brig, Private Millett, Corporal Hammett; Morell, Aubrey and, it seemed, Ennis and Trevor.

"They got Mr. Trevor, sir," panted the man at his side.

As they came level with the Dump they saw in front of them, running from north to south, Dump Trench in the old German line, packed with the khaki balmorals of the Ninth Division. They jumped into a small communication trench with a sigh of relief. . . .

COMFORT IN MAD CONFUSION

AS they scurried along that communication trench in the direction of the balmorals a field message was handed down, passing from man to man; Broadchalk opened it eagerly.

"The Major-General commanding the —th Division has the situation in hand. The Seventy-third Brigade will retire and occupy the trenches dug for them on the right." (Quoted from memory.) There was a strange sense of comfort in the words. Broadchalk's confidence, during that dash for safety, had been on the wane; now to his confused and stupefied mind there came order once more; things were moving according to plan, a general had the situation in hand—he found himself marvelling at the efficiency of any man who could control such a turmoil and make his dispositions on a leaf torn out of a Field Service Pocket Book. He sent the message to the rear, in the hope that it would reach Morell.

Suddenly the trench was jammed and further progress was impossible. Broadchalk, who was in the rear of his men, jumped out of the trench and ran forward to see what the matter was. He found a couple of Scots sentries, their bayonets at the present, engaged in a heated altercation with one of his lance-corporals.

"They won't let us through, sir."

A subaltern was standing behind the Scots sentries.

"What in the hell does this mean?" asked Broadchalk.

The subaltern shrugged his shoulders. "My instructions are not to let anybody pass down this communication trench without a written order," he said.

Broadchalk saw red. "Damn it," he cried. "You passed the written order down to us yourself, not two minutes ago."

The subaltern shrugged his shoulders and murmured something unintelligible.

"Where's your company commander?" gasped Broadchalk. On getting no answer he stared helplessly about him. The small trench was hopelessly jammed.

A fresh batch of Fusiliers and Sussex, who had worked their way back from the Dump, were clustering in a knot in the rear, and even as Broadchalk noticed them a German machine-gun from one of the houses snapped greedily at the morsel set before it, and, having wiped out the group, started to work systematically up the trench. He doubled back and rallied the survivors. "Come on," he shouted. "Out of that, quick."

They sprang forward once more, and doubled across the British front for a hundred yards.

"Here ye are, laddies!" bawled out a voice. It was from a giant Scots sergeant. . . .

They scrambled into the trench, and found themselves among friends—the remnants of the Black Watch they had relieved on Saturday night.

"Well done, the Fusiliers!" boomed the voice. "Man, ye've held a tight corner fine."

They passed along that front line, which was packed tight with men, so that packs stuck and bodies must be jammed against the trench in order to make a passage . . . .

HERE and there was a semblance of order, where the supports had had two days to organize, and had been watching the grim drama being enacted at the Fosse.

In one such stretch of trench Broadchalk found some officers. "Have you seen anything of the Fusiliers—73rd Brigade?" he asked.

"I think there are some up on the left. You'd better collect your fellows and stow them behind somewhere. We're hopelessly overcrowded as it is, and you've had your whack."

Broadchalk took the hint. It had been an awful job, squashing his way through that jammed mass of men: obviously they were not wanted. It would give him a chance to organize them, and see how many were left. . . .



IN REMEMBRANCE OF A COMRADE

After a battle there was often no time to bury decently the bodies of the fallen, and many were hurriedly placed together in common, shallow graves. But some of the British dead, when circumstances allowed, were found a resting place in French churchyards, as seen in this photograph. When the war ended, these graves, like those in the fighting areas, were opened and re-interment was made in the great war cemeteries in France. The French style of the wreath and the spelling show that the tribute is a local French product.



FROM THE DARKNESS OF BATTLE THEY PASS TO SUNLIT PAVÉ AND REST

The battle of Loos was a terrific test of the tenacity and fighting spirit of the British troops who were engaged in that great assault which forced the Germans to fall back and leave the little mining village when the offensive was sprung upon them. In this photograph (right) a column of infantry is seen marching at ease over the pavé of a village street, on their way to a rest camp after the fighting round Loos was over. The expressions on the faces of these heroic men, weary and dour after hours of terrible combat, tell something of the strain through which they have passed. Some other troops are fortunate enough to travel by ancient buses.

Imperial War Museum





THEY CAME ALIVE OUT OF THE MUD AND HORROR OF LOOS

In the assault upon the village of Loos which opened on September 25, 1915, soldiers of the Old Army, the New Army and also the Territorials went forward together after the enemy's lines and strongholds had been smashed and hammered by a gigantic bombardment. It was a battle of intense ferocity in which bayonets, hand-grenades and gas, as well as rifles and machine-guns, took a terrible toll. Then Loos, with its mines, slag heaps and shattered houses fell into British hands. Here (left) are some of the gallant men who helped to make the capture. Wounded, bedraggled and mud-caked, they are about to entrain for a base hospital.

L.N.A.





A BRITISH HEROINE COMES HOME *Daily Mirror*

The tragic death of Nurse Cavell, described by Mr. Brand Whitlock in Chapter 92, made her a national heroine, and in May 1919 her body was exhumed and brought to England for a public funeral with full military honours. After a memorial service in Westminster Abbey, she was buried in the precincts of Norwich Cathedral, for she was born in Norfolk. The photograph shows the gun carriage with its escort passing along Victoria Street on its way to the Abbey.

LOOS: The ENEMY ATTACKS

We were in a Tight Corner

by John Easton

THE author, who in Chapter 89 told a haunting story of the German attack at Loos on September 27, here continues his narrative of the fateful hours. He writes in the third person, giving himself the pseudonym Broadchalk, and tells of as thrilling adventures as were ever penned by a survivor of the Great War, and one of its most disastrous battles. His battalion was the 12th Royal Fusiliers, brigaded with the 9th Royal Sussex, the 7th Northants and the 13th Middlesex, forming the 73rd Brigade, 24th Division, all of which units are referred to in his narrative

BROADCHALK stood on the firing step and surveyed his men.

They were a queer score of ragamuffins: clay-covered figures, streaked with grime and blood: their rifles clay-splashed; their puttees, like brown paper leggings, stuck fast to their shins; their boots great paws of hard mud. There were Fusiliers, Sussex, and Middlesex of his own Brigade, and half a dozen Scotsmen who had lost their units in the first advance and fought ever since wherever they could find a man to lead them.

A Middlesex sergeant got them into shape and divided them into two sections.

Broadchalk climbed on to the top of the redoubt and took stock of the position.

BEFORE him lay the village [of Auchy], now wrapt in a thick mist which was swirling towards them: the first damp of its drizzle fanned his face as he watched. Half right the ill-omened Dump loomed out of the mist, a grey formless monstrosity, full of the mystery that is inseparable from territory unsurveyed. What secrets might not be hidden in that mighty heap of slag? Rumour mentioned a tunnel and a shaft, by means of which the German gunners had fixed up observation posts before the battle with impunity: by means of which German infantry, having lured the British into a false sense of acquired possession, attacked and bombed them from the rear. Now it lay with all its mystery unsolved, apparently in German hands again. Where was that line of trenches that had been dug for them on the right?

Broadchalk's lateral vision was limited to a hundred yards each way, even though he was standing on a pinnacle of the parapet. He felt strangely naked when standing on the top of the trenches in full view of the enemy.

The mist was getting thicker and thicker: was it to be their saviour, or was it to form a bank of cloud behind which the enemy could advance in mass? The Scotsmen were running no risk, for they kept up a steady fire: Broadchalk hauled his men out of the redoubt and gave them a bout of firing: it steadied them, and caused no danger to defenders of the trench which was in front, for they were on higher ground.

Suddenly he saw two figures standing together some sixty yards to his left. He stopped, looked again, and his heart leapt within him: it was Trevor [a fellow subaltern whom he had thought killed]—Trevor, talking to Parsons, the commander of "C" Company.

The whole of Broadchalk's responsibility dropped from his shoulders simultaneously with his first muttered gasp of joy. He shouted to his men, and set out at a run.

"What are you running for?" asked Trevor cheerfully, as Broadchalk arrived panting at his side. . . .

DEATH OF A HERO

THE next hour was a nightmare of muddle and confusion. Parsons had lost his company, and had taken up his position on the parapet as the only field officer known to be alive in the area.

He was a big man, nearly stone deaf, and the enemy was barely two hundred yards away—to get orders was no mean feat: Broadchalk stood on his toes and shouted in his ear, and the snipers' bullets whizzed past his head continuously.

The organization of the line and the check of any suspicion of a rout was largely due to Parsons: he stood on the top of the trenches with his arms folded, a great monument of a man, collecting the men as they were driven in and guiding them to this or that trench. A faint smile played over his lips and hinted at the deaf man's oblivion to rattle and noise, or the infection of shaken nerves.

Broadchalk told him about the field message. "You two had better prospect for a gap, and if you find it stay there. You can't do anything here, we're jammed solid as it is. If you find my company let me know!"

Ten minutes later he fell, shot through the head.

PARSONS was right about the jam: it was even worse up on the left than opposite the Dump. For hours Trevor and Broadchalk wandered in that hopeless maze of trenches: soaked by the drizzle, cold, hungry, thirsty and tired: above all, unwanted. Once there was an attack: they lined the top of a redoubt and fired at the faint outlines that emerged from the mist, stumbled and came no farther; once they were gassed—in a communication trench—and stood waiting in semi-yellow fog, striving to peer through the clouded mica windows of their helmets, ready to jump out and rush at any enemy that might appear in its wake; once, in a rush forward through shrapnel and machine-gun fire—for they had abandoned groping in that maze of trench and moved in the open—Broadchalk felt a terrific blow on the left shoulder and was knocked clean backwards off his feet.

"They've got me this time," he said to Trevor, who was standing over him.

"Where?"

"In the arm. I can't move it."

They dragged him to his feet, and Trevor took out his knife.

"What are you going to do?"

"Cut the sleeve off and tie you up," said Trevor.

"It's—it's not bleeding," answered Broadchalk. "Leave it alone for a bit."

He staggered forward, with his arm hanging limp by his side.

"Must have been a ricochet got me on the shoulder-strap."

A couple of men fell. A bullet crashed into Trevor's field-glasses, smashed one half and penetrated his breeches without breaking his skin. The force of the blow winded him.

Once they found themselves in the open at the left-hand corner of the Dump, the mist swirling about their heads.

"How in the hell did we get here?" grunted Trevor.

"There must be a gap somewhere!" cried Broadchalk excitedly, "and we have walked through it."

"Then we'd better get back and fill it up," said Trevor.

A young Scots subaltern, with half-a-dozen men at his heels, suddenly appeared at their side.

"I can't stand it any more!" he shouted hysterically. "I'm going to have a smack at 'em. Come on, boys!"

He dashed forward and was swallowed up by the fog.

"There's a brave man, anyway," said Trevor. "But what good can he do?"

THEY fell back in an attempt to find the gap in the line through which they had passed, but with no success. The trenches were as densely held as ever.

"You fellows will get your heads knocked off if you aren't careful," grumbled a voice.

It came from a Sussex company commander who, with a dozen men, was occupying a communication trench leading into the thickly manned front line. For an hour or more they sat and talked to him. At his side there lay a subaltern whose nerve had gone. Broadchalk looked at him anxiously, almost fascinated by him.

"Don't take any notice," whispered the captain. "He'll buck up in a minute. He had a bad time on the Dump."

The sight of those broken nerves brought back both to Trevor and Broadchalk a realization of their own physical condition. While they had been on the move they had had no time to think of themselves; there had been too much to do, too much to watch, and the tension of being shelled, gassed and attacked; also their quest, to find that strip of trench dug for them on the right, loomed largely in their minds. Now they found inactivity, helplessness, despair. They remembered how empty they were, how thirsty, how cold, how wet; that the enemy had turned them out of their position. In place of hope, they were confronted by a realization of failure and destruction.

"WHAT are they going to do to us?" groaned Broadchalk. The idea that a battalion can be decimated and yet survive to fight again did not enter his mind. "What will they do to us?" he repeated. "Send us home, I suppose."

His arm ached, his tongue felt too large for his mouth, his head swam, his eyes were craving to be closed, his stomach was hollow, his skin seemed to be drawn painfully across his ribs. Sixty hours now since sleep, food and drink had been part and parcel of his life.

Trevor glanced at him anxiously, and from him to the broken subaltern, whose teeth were chattering with that helpless regularity that comes to a man in the grip of malaria.

"This cold has got hold of him," explained the Sussex captain. "He'll be all right in a jiffy."

All right! If only one could keep one's eyes off him—fall to sleep now and forget him!

"Reinforcements wanted on the right." The message was shouted along the line. The captain rose to his feet.

"COME along, Sussex," he said, and pushed his way along the trench. "I suppose you fellows are coming, too?" he called over his shoulder, as he disappeared behind a traverse.

Broadchalk and Trevor looked at one another in hesitation. An hour earlier they would have been on the parapet and running for the promised trenches; now it seemed different, with the chatter of those teeth rattling in their ears.

Broadchalk spoke first, feebly, listening to the words as they fell from his own lips, listening with as much surprise as his muddled head was capable of expressing. He could scarcely recognize his own voice, and marvelled as to where it came from and by whom it was prompted.

"That's only for the Sussex," he said huskily. "Perhaps, if we worked our way back to the rear, we might find the Fusiliers."

He was two people now, two distinct personalities, a creature of a waking nightmare. One half of him had given way to an absolute weariness of mind and body; the other still clung to a phantom of duty, still tried to hammer into his clouded mind and aching limbs the fact that there was a job of work to be done.

TREVOR did not answer him immediately. They both stood in silence for a moment. Then he said: "I don't know" casually and with a start, as if he, too, had been surprised by his own words.

They gazed at one another in misery, pulled themselves together simultaneously, gathered their men and followed on the heels of the Sussex captain.

THE WALKING WOUNDED RIDE

The pitiable lot of the severely wounded as they were carried by tortuous routes to crowded casualty clearing stations remains amongst the most poignant memories of those who saw the war at close quarters. This scene, however, strikes a less tragic note. Walking wounded cases from Loos are en route for the base by train, and during a halt receive a welcome drink to sustain and cheer them on their way.

L.N.A.





A FIGHTING FUSILIER

At the age of nineteen Robert Graves joined the British Army in 1914, as a subaltern with the Royal Welch Fusiliers in France. His brilliant writings after the conflict have placed him in the front rank of modern authors, his war-books in particular being of outstanding merit.

An AUTHOR lives GREAT TRAGEDY

One More Ghastly Memory of Loos

by Robert Graves

THE famous writer Robert Graves, incorporated his war experiences in one of the best-known war books, "Good-Bye to All That." At the battle of Loos he was serving as a lieutenant in the 2nd Battn. Royal Welch Fusiliers. He was in the very thick of the fighting and lived to describe this bloody action in magnificent descriptive prose

THE Béthune-La Bassée road was choked with troops, guns, and transport, and we had to march miles north out of our way to get back to Cambrin. As it was we were held up two or three times by massed cavalry. Everything seemed in confusion. A casualty clearing-station had been planted astride one of the principal cross-roads, and was already being shelled. When we reached Cambrin we had marched about twenty miles in all that day. We were told then that the Middlesex would go over first, with us in support, and to their left the Second Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, with the Cameronians in support; the junior officers complained loudly at our not being given the honour of leading the attack. We were the senior regiment, they protested, and entitled to the "Right of the Line." We moved into trench sidings just in front of the village.

There was about half a mile of communication trench between us and the trenches proper, known as Maison Rouge Alley. It was an hour or so past midnight. At half-past five the gas was to be discharged. We were cold, tired and sick, not at all in the mood for a battle. We tried to snatch an hour or two of sleep squatting in the trench. It had been raining for some time. Grey, watery dawn broke at last behind the German lines; the bombardment, which had been surprisingly slack all night, brisked up a little. "Why the devil don't they send them over quicker?" asked The Actor [a fellow officer]. "This isn't my idea of a bombardment. We're getting nothing opposite us. What little there is is going into the Hohenzollern." "Shell shortage. Expected it," answered Thomas [company commander].

We were told afterwards that on the 23rd a German aeroplane had bombed the Army Reserve shell-dump and sent it up. The bombardment on the 24th and on the day of the battle itself was nothing compared with that of the previous days. Thomas looked strained and ill. "It's time they were sending that damned accessory off. I wonder what's doing." [Accessory was a code word for gas].

What happened in the next few minutes is difficult for me now to sort out. It was more difficult still at the time. All we heard back there in the sidings was a distant cheer, confused crackle of rifle-fire, yells, heavy shelling on our front line, more shouts and yells and a continuous rattle of machine-guns. After a few minutes, lightly wounded men of the Middlesex came stumbling down Maison Rouge Alley to the dressing-station. I was at the junction of the siding and the alley. "What's happened? What's happened?" I asked. . . .

YELLOW WITH GAS

AMONG the wounded were a number of men yellow-faced and choking, with their buttons tarnished green; these were gas cases. Then came the stretcher cases. Maison Rouge Alley was narrow, and the stretchers had difficulty in getting down. The Germans started shelling it with five-point-nines. Thomas went through the shelling to battalion headquarters to ask for orders. It was the same place that I had visited on my first night in the trenches.

This group of dug-outs in the reserve line showed very plainly from the air as battalion headquarters, and should never have been occupied on the day of a battle. Just before Thomas arrived the Germans put five shells into it. The adjutant jumped one way, the colonel another, the regimental sergeant-major a third. One shell went into the signals dug-out and destroyed the telephone. The colonel had a slight wound on his hand; he joined the stream of wounded and was carried as far as the base with it. The adjutant took charge.

ALL this time "A" Company had been waiting in the siding for the rum to arrive; the tradition of every attack was a double tot of rum beforehand. All the other companies got it except ours. The Actor was cursing: "Where the bloody hell's that storeman gone?" We fixed bayonets in readiness to go up to the attack as soon as Thomas came back with orders. The Actor sent me along the siding to the other end of the company. The stream of wounded was continuous. At last Thomas's orderly appeared, saying: "Captain's orders, sir: "A" Company to move up to the front line."

It seems that at that moment the storeman appeared with the rum. He was hugging the rum-bottle, without rifle or equipment, red-faced and retching. He staggered up to The Actor and said: "There you are, sir," then fell on his face in the thick mud of a sump-pit at the junction of the trench and the siding. The stopper of the bottle flew out and what was left of the contents bubbled on the ground. The Actor said nothing. It was a crime deserving the death-penalty. He put one foot on the storeman's neck, the other in the small of his back, and trod him into the mud. Then he gave the order "Company forward." The company went forward with a clatter of steel over the body, and that was the last heard of the storeman.

What had happened in the front line was this. At half-past four the commander of the gas-company in the

front line sent a telephone message through to divisional headquarters: "Dead calm. Impossible discharge accessory." The answer came back: "Accessory to be discharged at all costs." Thomas's estimate of the gas-company's efficiency was right enough. The spanners for unscrewing the cocks of the cylinders were found, with two or three exceptions, to be misfits. The gas-men rushed about shouting and asking each other for the loan of an adjustable spanner. They discharged one or two cylinders with the spanners that they had; the gas went whistling out, formed a thick cloud a few yards away in No Man's Land, and then gradually spread back into the trenches.

THE Germans had been expecting the attack. They immediately put their gas-helmets on, semi-rigid ones, better than ours. Bundles of oily cotton-waste were strewn along the German parapet and set alight as a barrier to the gas. Then their batteries opened on our lines. The confusion in the front trench was great; the shelling broke several of the gas-cylinders and the trench was soon full of gas. The gas-company dispersed.

No orders could come through because the shell in the signals dug-out at battalion headquarters had cut communication both between companies and battalion headquarters and between battalion headquarters and division. The officers in the front trench had to decide on immediate action. Two companies of the Middlesex, instead of waiting for the intense bombardment which was to follow the forty minutes of gas, charged at once and got as far as the German wire—which our artillery had not yet attempted to cut.

What shelling there had been on it was shrapnel and not high explosive; shrapnel was no use against barbed wire. The Germans shot the Middlesex men down. It is said that one platoon found a gap and got into the German trench. But there were no survivors of the platoon to confirm the story.

THE Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders went over too, on their left. Two companies, instead of charging at once, rushed back to the support line out of the gas-filled front trench and attacked from there. It will be recalled that the front line had been pushed forward in preparation for the battle; these companies were therefore attacking from the old front line. The barbed wire entanglements in front of this trench had not been removed, so that they were caught and machine-gunned between their own front and support lines. The leading companies were equally unsuccessful. When the attack started, the German N.C.O.'s had jumped up on the parapet to encourage their men. It was a Jaeger regiment and their musketry was good.

The survivors of the first two companies of the Middlesex were lying in shell-craters close to the German wire, sniping and making the Germans keep their heads down. They had bombs to throw, but these were nearly all of a new type issued for the battle; the fuses were lit on the match-and-matchbox principle and the rain had made them useless. The other two companies of the Middlesex soon followed in support. Machine-gun fire stopped them half-way. Only one German machine-gun was now in action.

It was at this point that the Royal Welch Fusiliers came up in support. Maison Rouge Alley was a nightmare; the Germans were shelling it with five-nines bursting with a black smoke and with lachrymatory shells. This caused a continual scramble backwards and forwards. There were cries and counter-cries: "Come on!" "Get back, you bastards!" "Gas turning on us." "Keep your heads, you men." "Back like hell, boys!" "Whose orders?" "What's happening?" "Gas!" "Back!" "Come on!" "Gas!" "Back!" Wounded men and stretcher-bearers were still trying to squeeze past. We were alternately putting on and taking off our gas-helmets and that made things worse. In many places the trench was filled in and we had to scramble over the top.

END OF A COMPANY

CHILDE-FREEMAN [a company commander] got up to the front line with only fifty men of "B" Company; the rest had lost their way in some abandoned trenches half-way up. The adjutant met him in the support line. "You ready to go over, Freeman?" he asked. Freeman had to admit that he had lost most of his company. He felt this keenly as a disgrace; it was the first time that he had commanded a company in battle. He decided to go over with his fifty men in support of the Middlesex. He blew his whistle and the company charged. They were stopped by machine-gun fire before they

THEY MARCHED THIS WAY TO FIGHT AT LOOS

Before the battle of Loos started on the morning of September 25, 1915, men of the Royal Welch Fusiliers made a wearisome march along the Béthune–La Bassée road to the cheerless village of Cambrin, and there they waited for zero hour. This photograph was taken not far from the trenches they occupied outside Cambrin, where the scenes of chaos and horror, described with such harsh realism in this chapter, occurred

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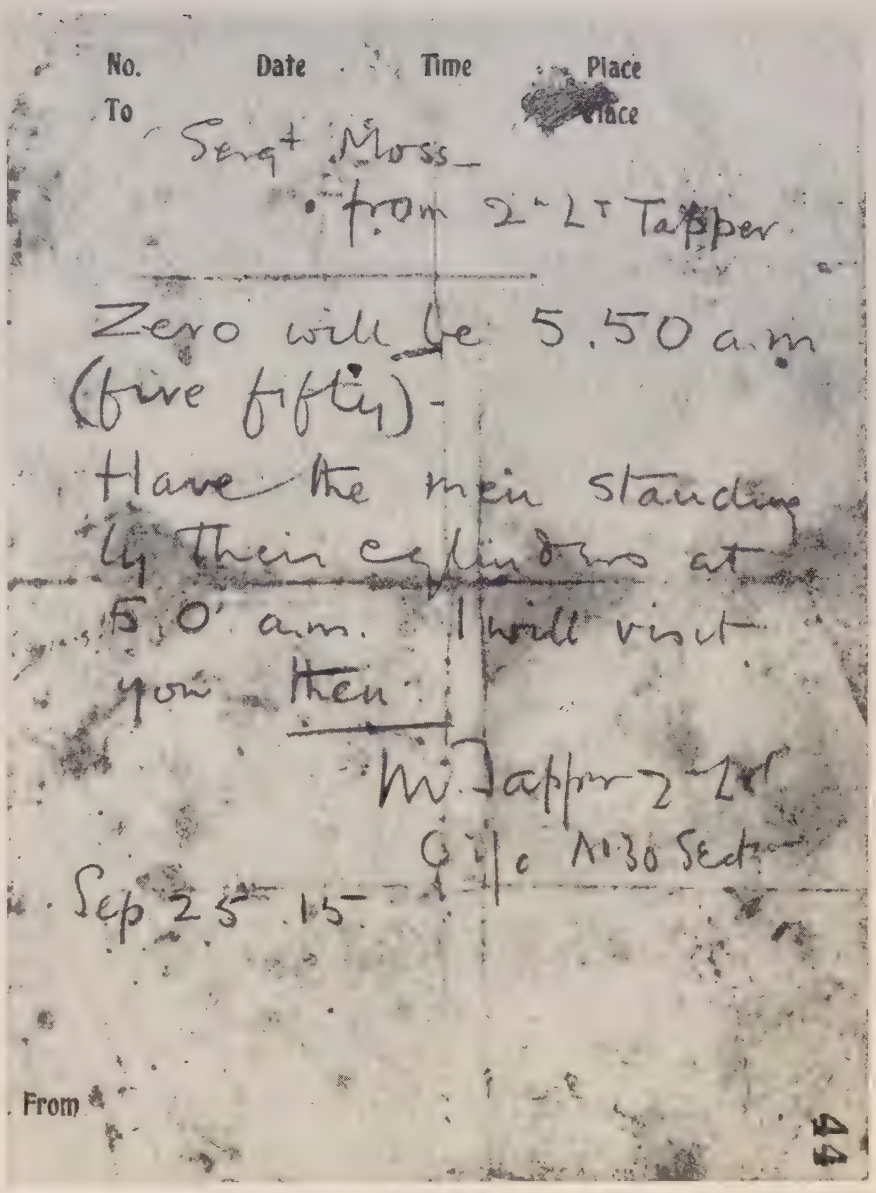


had passed our own entanglements. Freeman himself died, but of heart failure, as he stood on the parapet. After a few minutes "C" Company and the remainder of "B" reached the front line. The gas-cylinders were still whistling and the trench full of dying men. Samson decided to go over; he would not have it said that the Royal Welch had let down the Middlesex.

THERE was a strong comradely feeling between the Middlesex and the Royal Welch. The Royal Welch and Middlesex were drawn together in dislike of the Scots. The other three battalions in the brigade were Scottish, and the brigadier was a Scot, and, unjustly no doubt, accused of favouring them. Our adjutant voiced the general opinion: "The Jocks are all the same, the trousered variety and the bare-backed variety. They're dirty in trenches, they skite too much, and they charge like hell—both ways." The Middlesex, who were the original Diehard battalion, had more than once, with the Royal Welch, considered themselves let down by the Jocks. So Samson with "C" and the rest of "B" Company charged.

One of the officers told me later what happened to himself. It had been agreed to advance by platoon rushes with supporting fire. When his platoon had run about twenty yards he signalled them to lie down and open covering fire.

The din was tremendous. He saw the platoon on the left flopping down too, so he whistled the advance again. Nobody seemed to hear. He jumped up from his shell-hole and waved and signalled "Forward." Nobody stirred. He shouted: "You bloody cowards, are you leaving me to go alone?" His platoon sergeant, groaning with a broken shoulder, gasped out: "Not cowards, sir. Willing enough. But they're all . . . dead." A machine-gun traversing had caught them as they rose to the whistle.



'. . . ZERO WILL BE FIVE-FIFTY'

The cryptic message, reproduced above, constitutes the original operation orders which passed from 2nd Lt. Tapper to Sergeant Moss, and is a relic of the day when the British used gas for the first time as a prelude to the battle of Loos. As told in this chapter, lack of wind at the crucial zero hour, faulty keys for opening the cylinders, and enemy shells turned the effort into a disastrous failure.

Imperial War Museum

OUR company too had become separated by the shelling. The Surrey man [an attached officer of the E. Surreys] got a touch of gas and went coughing back. The Actor said he was scrim-shanking and didn't want the battle. This was unfair. The Surrey man looked properly sick. I do not know what happened to him, but I heard that the gas was not much, and that he managed, a few months later, to get back to his own regiment in France. I found myself with The Actor in a narrow trench between the front and support lines. This trench had not been built wide enough for a stretcher to pass the bends.

We came on The Boy [a ranker company commander] lying on his stretcher wounded in the lungs and the stomach. Jamaica [nickname for the trench mortar officer] was standing over him in tears, blubbering: "Poor old Boy, poor old Boy, he's going to die; I'm sure he is. He's the only one who was decent to me." The Actor found we could not get by. He said to Jamaica: "Take that poor sod out of the way, will you? I've got to get my company up. Put him into a dug-out or somewhere." Jamaica made no answer; he seemed paralysed by the horror of the occasion. He could only repeat: "Poor old Boy, poor old Boy." "Look here," said The Actor, "if you can't shift him into a dug-out we'll have to lift him on top of the trench. He can't live now and we're late getting up." "No, no," Jamaica shouted wildly.

The Actor lost his temper and shook Jamaica roughly by the shoulders. "You're the bloody trench-mortar wallah, aren't you?" he asked fiercely. Jamaica nodded miserably. "Well, your battery is a hundred yards from here. Why the hell aren't you using your gas-pipes on that machine-gun in the Pope's Nose? Buzz off back to them." And he kicked him down the trench. Then he called over his shoulder:



WHERE THE TRAGEDY OF LOOS WAS PLAYED OUT

The last tragedy of the battle of Loos was an attempt to recapture the Hohenzollern Redoubt, by the 46th (North Midland) Division. It was only partially successful, and the fighting on October 13 and 14, according to the Official History, brought nothing of value and entailed a useless slaughter of infantry. Above is the scene during the attack on October 13. The British trenches and approaches can be traced by the chalk excavations crossing the foreground. There are clouds of smoke and gas in the centre and on the left. In the centre and on the right shells are bursting. Fosse 8 can be made out by the shrapnel exploding in the centre. The Redoubt is this side of it.

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HOHENZOLLERN REDOUBT

OF EVIL MEMORIES

AND MEN WHO FOUGHT THERE

In the opposite page the country around the Hohenzollern Redoubt is shown while the battle was in progress, and above is a photograph taken when it had eventually fallen in British hands later in the war. The sandbagging has been increased, but an excellent idea is given of the strength of the position which was captured on September 25, 1915, only to be lost again on October 3. On October 13, the 46th Division managed to regain the western portion at the cost of very heavy casualties; and, below, a party of wounded men of this division is seen returning after the action.



" Sergeant Rose and Corporal Jennings, lift this stretcher up across the top of the trench. We've got to pass." Jamaica leaned against a traverse. " I do think you're the most heartless beast I've ever met," he said weakly.

We went on up to the front line. It was full of dead and dying. The captain of the gas company, who had kept his head, and had a special oxygen respirator, had by now turned off the gas. Vermorel-sprayers had cleared out most of the gas, but we still had to wear our masks. We climbed up and crouched on the fire-step, where the gas was not so thick. Then Thomas arrived with the remainder of " A " Company and, with " D," we waited for the whistle to follow the other two companies over.

FORTUNATELY at this moment the adjutant appeared. He told Thomas that he was now in command of the battalion and he didn't care a damn about orders ; he was going to cut his losses. He said he would not send " A " and " D " over until he got definite orders from Brigade. He had sent a runner back because telephone communication was cut, and we must wait. Meanwhile the intense bombardment that was to follow the forty minutes' discharge of gas began. It concentrated on the German front trench and wire. A good deal of it was short, and we had further casualties in our trenches. The survivors of the Middlesex and of our " B " and " C " Companies in craters in No Man's Land suffered heavily.



THE COOKS AND THEIR KITCHENS CAME BACK

The Army cooks, though non-combatants, were none the less called upon to show courage of the first order, for they, with their field-kitchens, fed the troops from just behind the front line. Here a column of field kitchens is returning from the battle of Loos. Behind the limber is the cooker, a boiler and self-contained furnace, in which soups and stews were cooked either when halted or on the march.

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My mouth was dry, my eyes out of focus, and my legs quaking under me. I found a water-bottle full of rum and drank about half a pint ; it quieted me and my head remained clear. Samson (" C " Company commander) was lying wounded about twenty yards away from the front trench. Several attempts were made to get him in. He was very badly hit and groaning.

THREE men were killed in these attempts and two officers and two men wounded. Finally his own orderly managed to crawl out to him. Samson ordered him back, saying that he was riddled and not worth rescuing ; he sent his apologies to the company for making such a noise. We waited for about a couple of hours for the order to charge. Sergeant Townsend was making feeble, bitter jokes about the good old British Army muddling through and how he thanked God we still had a Navy. I shared the rest of the rum with him, and he cheered up a little. Finally a runner came with a message that the attack was off for the present.



DEATH-TRAP OF BARBED WIRE

The barbed wire entanglements used in defence by the Germans were of what was known as the " knife-rest " type. A rough wooden trestle in the form of a knife-rest was strung across with many strands of barbed wire, and a number of these placed together, as seen in this photograph taken on the battlefield of Loos, made a practically impassable obstacle.

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I PLEADED IN VAIN for NURSE CAVELL

by Brand Whitlock

U.S. Minister in Belgium, 1915

A FAMOUS American diplomat tells of the dramatic last appeals for mercy made to the Germans on behalf of that brave nurse, Edith Cavell, accused of smuggling British and Belgian soldiers across the frontier, who was to be shot less than twelve hours after she was condemned. As is known, these pleas were ignored, and a crime was committed which sent a wave of horror throughout the English-speaking peoples. Miss Cavell's last thoughts were embodied in the famous words: "Patriotism is not enough"



HE LEFT NO STONE UNTURNED

Though lying on a sick bed, Mr. Brand Whitlock, above, left no stone unturned to save Nurse Cavell, and where the representative of the greatest neutral power failed no one could have succeeded.

At nine o'clock that Monday evening [October 11, 1915], Maître de Leval [a lawyer friend of the author] appeared suddenly at the door of my chamber; his face was deathly pallid. He said that he had just heard from the nurses who were keeping him informed, that the judgement had been confirmed and that the sentence of death had been pronounced on Miss Cavell at half-past four that afternoon and that she was to be shot at two o'clock the next morning. It seemed impossible, especially the immediate execution of sentence; there had always been time at least to prepare and to present a plea for mercy. To condemn a woman in the evening and then to hurry her out to be shot before another dawn! Preposterous!

But no; Maître de Leval was certain. That evening he had gone home and was writing at his table when, about eight o'clock, two nurses were introduced. One was Miss Wilkison, "petite et nerveuse, toute en larmes," the other "plus grande et plus calme." Miss Wilkison said that she had just learned that the court had condemned Miss Cavell to death, that the judgement had been read to her in the cell of the prison at four-thirty that afternoon, and that the Germans were going to shoot her that night at two o'clock. Maître de Leval told her that it was difficult to believe such news since twice he had been told that the judgement had not been rendered and would not be rendered before the following day, but on her reiterating that she had this news from a source that was indisputable, de Leval left at once with her and her friend and came to the Legation. And there he stood, pale and shaken. Even then I could not believe—it was too preposterous; surely a stay of execution would be granted. Already in the afternoon, in some premonition, Maître de Leval had prepared for my signature a recours en grâce to be submitted to the Governor-General, and a letter of transmittal to present to the Baron von der Lancken. I asked Maître de Leval to bring me these documents, and signed them; then at the last minute, on the letter addressed to von der Lancken [Head of the German Political Section in Brussels], I wrote these words:

Mon cher Baron,—Je suis trop malade pour vous présenter ma requête moi-même, mais je fais appel à votre générosité de coeur pour l'appuyer et sauver de la mort cette malheureuse. Ayez pitié d'elle!

Votre bien dévoué,
BRAND WHITLOCK.

I told Maître de Leval to send Joseph at once to hunt up Gibson [Secretary of the U.S. Legation] to present the plea, and if possible to find the Marquis de Villalobar [the Spanish Minister] and to ask him to support it with the Baron von der Lancken . . . . The Governor-General was in his château at Trois-Fontaines, ten miles away, playing bridge that evening. Maître de Leval went . . . .

The nurses from Miss Cavell's school were waiting in a lower room. Other nurses came for news; they too had heard, but could not believe. Then the Reverend Mr. Gahan, pastor of the English church, came.

He had had a note from someone at the St. Gilles prison—a note written in German, saying simply:

"Come at once; someone is about to die."

He went away to the prison; his frail, delicate little wife remained at the Legation, and there my wife and Miss Larner sat with those women all that long evening, trying to comfort, to reassure them. Outside a cold rain was falling. Up in my chamber I waited . . . A stay of execution would be granted, of course; they always were granted. There was not in our time, anywhere, a court, even a German court-martial, that would condemn a woman to death at half-past four in the afternoon and hurry her out and shoot her before dawn.

Midnight came, and Gibson, with a dark face, and de Leval, paler than ever. There was nothing to be done. De Leval had gone to Gibson and together they went in search of the Marquis, whom they found at Baron Lambert's [a Belgian banker], where he had been dining; he and Baron Lambert



HE PROVED A BROKEN REED

The last pleas for the life of Nurse Cavell were made to Baron von der Lancken, above, but as representative only of the German civil power, he declared his inability to do more than pass on the plea to the Military Governor.



CONDEMNED CELL BECOMES A SHRINE

The last hours of Nurse Cavell's life were passed in this cell, No. 23, in St Gilles Prison, Brussels, and from here she was taken to the Tir National, where, at 2 a.m. on the morning of October 12, she faced a German firing party with unflinching courage, her last words being " I am glad to die for my country." The cell has been kept as nearly as possible as it was when Nurse Cavell occupied it, flowers and her portrait being the only additions that have been made.

and M. Francqui [Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Committee] were over their coffee. The Marquis, Gibson, and de Leval went to the rue Lambermont. The Ministry was closed and dark ; no one was there. They rang, and rang again, and finally the concierge appeared—no one was there, he said. They insisted. The concierge at last found a German functionary, who came down, stood staring stupidly ; every one was gone ; His Excellency was at the theatre. At what theatre ? He did not know. They urged him to go and find out. He disappeared inside, went up and down the stairs two or three times, finally came out and said that he was at " Le Bois Sacré." They explained that the presence of the Baron was urgent and asked the man to go for him ; they turned over the motor to him and he mounted on the box beside Eugène. They reached the little variety theatre there in the rue d'Arenberg. The German functionary went in and found the Baron, who said he would come when the piece was over.

. . . . . .

All this while Villalobar, Gibson, and de Leval were in the salon at the Ministry, the room of which I have spoken so often as the yellow salon because of the satin upholstery of its Louis XVI furniture of white lacquer—that bright, almost laughing little salon, all done in the gayest, lightest tones, where so many little dramas were played. All three of them were deeply moved and very anxious—the eternal contrast, as de Leval said, between sentiments and things. Lancken entered at last, very much surprised to find them ; he was accompanied by Count Harrach and by the young Baron von Falkenhausen.

" What is it, gentlemen ? " he said. " Has something serious happened ? "

They told him why they were there, and Lancken, raising his hands, said :

" Impossible ! "

He had vaguely heard that afternoon of a condemnation for " spying " (*sic*), but he did not know that it had anything to do with the case of Miss Cavell, and in any event it was impossible that they would put a woman to death that night.

" Who has given you this information ? For, really, to come and disturb me at such an hour you must have information from serious and trustworthy sources."

De Leval replied :

" Without doubt, I consider my information trustworthy, but I must refuse to tell you from whom I received it. Besides, what difference does it make ? If the information is true our presence at this hour is justified ; if it is not true I am ready to take the consequence of my mistake."

The Baron showed irritation.

" What ! " he said. " It is because ' they say ' that you come and disturb

me at such an hour, me and these gentlemen? No, no, gentlemen, this news cannot be true; orders are never executed with such precipitation, especially when a woman is concerned. Come to see me tomorrow."

He paused, and then added:

"Besides, how do you think that at this hour I can obtain any information. The Governor-General must certainly be sleeping."

Gibson, or one of them, suggested to him that a very simple way of finding out would be to telephone to the prison.

"Quite right," he said; "I had not thought of that."

He went out, was gone a few minutes, and came back embarrassed, so they said, even a little bit ashamed, for he said:

"You are right, gentlemen; I have learned by telephone that Miss Cavell has been condemned, and that she will be shot to-night."

THEN de Leval drew out the letter that I had written to the Baron and gave it to him, and he read it in an undertone—with a little sarcastic smile, so de Leval said—and when he had finished he handed it back to de Leval and said:

"But it is necessary to have a plea for mercy at the same time . . ."

"Here it is," said de Leval, and he gave him the document. Then they all sat down.

I could see the scene—as it was described to me by Villalobar, by Gibson, by de Leval, in that pretty little Salon Louis Seize that I knew so well—Lancken giving way to an outburst of feeling against "that spy," as he called Miss Cavell, and Gibson and de Leval by turns pleading with him, the Marquis sitting by. It was not a question of spying, as they pointed out; it was a question of the life of a woman—a life that had been devoted to charity, to the service of others.

She had nursed wounded soldiers, she had even nursed German wounded at the beginning of the war, and now she was accused of but one thing—of having helped British soldiers make their way towards Holland. She may have been imprudent, she may have acted against the laws of the occupying Power, but she was not a spy, she was not even accused of being a spy, she had not been convicted of spying, and she did not merit the death of a spy.

They sat there pleading, Gibson and de Leval, bringing forth all the arguments that would occur to men of sense and sensibility. Gibson called Lancken's attention to their failure to inform the Legation of the sentence, of their failure to keep the word that had been given.

HE argued that the offence charged against Miss Cavell had long since been accomplished, that as she had been for some weeks in prison a slight delay in carrying out the sentence could not endanger the German cause; he even pointed out the effect such a deed as the summary execution of the death sentence against a woman would have on public opinion, not only in Belgium but in America and elsewhere; he even spoke of the possibility of reprisals.

But it was all in vain. Baron von der Lancken explained to them that the Military Governor—that is, General von Sauberzweig—was the supreme authority in matters of this sort, that the Governor-General himself had no authority to intervene in such cases, and that under the provisions of German martial law it lay within the discretion of the Military Governor to accept or refuse an appeal for clemency. And then Villalobar suddenly cried out:

"Oh, come now! It's a woman; you can't shoot a woman like that!"

The Baron paused, was evidently moved.

"Gentlemen, it is past eleven o'clock; what can be done?"

It was only von Sauberzweig who could act, he said, and they urged the Baron to go to see von Sauberzweig. Finally he consented. While he was gone, Villalobar, Gibson, and de Leval



IN DAYS OF PEACE

Nurse Cavell is here seen at home with her dogs before the shadow of war had fallen on Europe. She had an intense love for her country, and it was only her great sense of duty that took her in 1906 from her post of Superintendent of the London Infirmary to become Matron of the Belgian School of Certified Nurses in Brussels, where the events that led to her tragic death took place.

repeated to Harrach and von Falkenhausen all the arguments that might move them. Von Falkenhausen was young, he had been to Cambridge in England, and he was touched, though of course he was powerless. And de Leval says that when he gave signs of showing pity, Harrach cast a glance at him, so that he said nothing more, and that then Harrach said :

" The life of one German soldier seems to us much more important than that of all these old English nurses . . ."

At last Lancken returned and, standing there, announced :

" I am exceedingly sorry, but the Governor tells me that it is after due reflection that the execution was decided upon, and that he will not change his decision. . . Making use of his prerogative, he even refuses to receive the plea for mercy. . . Therefore, no one, not even the Emperor, can do anything for you."

With this he handed my letter and the requête en grâce to Gibson. There was a moment of silence in the yellow salon. Then Villalobar sprang up, and seizing Lancken by the shoulder said to him in an energetic tone :

" Baron, I insist on speaking to you ! "

" C'est inutile . . ." began Lancken.

" Je veux vous parler ! " the Marquis replied, giving categorical emphasis to the harsh imperative.

The old Spanish pride had been mounting in the Marquis, and he literally dragged the tall von der Lancken into a little room near by ; then voices were heard in sharp discussion, and even through the partition the voice of Villalobar :

" It is idiotic, this thing you are going to do ; you will have another Louvain ! "

A few moments later they came back—Villalobar in silent rage, Lancken very red. And, as de Leval said, without another word, dumb, in consternation, filled with despair, they came away.

I heard the report, and they withdrew. A little while and I heard the street door open. The women who had waited all that night went out into the rain.

. . . . . .

The rain had ceased, and the air was soft and warm the next morning ; the sunlight shone through an autumn haze. But over the city the horror of the dreadful deed hung like a pall. Affiches were early posted and crowds huddled about them in a kind of stupefaction, reading the long and tragic list down to the line that closed with a piece of gratuitous brutality.

" Le jugement rendu contre Baucq et Cavell a déjà été exécuté." [The sentence against Baucq and Cavell has already been carried out.]

Of the twenty-six others condemned with Miss Cavell, four—Philip Baucq, an architect of Brussels, Louis Thuillez, a school teacher of Lille, Louis Severin, a pharmacist of Brussels, and the Countess Jeanne de Belleville—were sentenced to death.

. . . . . .

All day long sad and solemn groups stood in the boulevards gazing at the grim affiche. In one of the throngs a dignified old judge said :

" Ce n'était pas l'exécution d'un jugement ; c'était un assassinat ! " [It was not the carrying out of a sentence ; it was murder !]





SHE WAS TRIED WITH NURSE CAVELL

Mme. Bodart, seen in the top photograph, was a close friend of Nurse Cavell and helped her with the greatest courage in giving assistance to escaping soldiers. Mme. Bodart accompanied the fugitives on their perilous journey, taking them by train to Haecht, whence they tramped for two nights and days to the Dutch frontier. In the lower photograph, Mme Bodart is standing at the level crossing at Haecht station. She was tried at the same time as Nurse Cavell and was sentenced to 15 years penal servitude.





'HER NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE'

These words are carved on the lowest stone of the plinth of the simple cross which marks Nurse Cavell's grave, seen above, beneath the walls of Norwich Cathedral. Two other memorials commemorate the tragic story. The spot where Nurse Cavell faced the firing party in the Tir National, Brussels, seen below, has been enclosed as a grave might be. The third memorial, right, is the dignified and impressive statue in London near the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. It was erected by public subscription, the fund having been inaugurated by the "Daily Telegraph." The sculptor was Sir George Frampton, R.A.

Photographs, L.N.A., Central Press, and G. MacCormack





L.N.A

BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

TO MY PEOPLE.

At this grave moment in the struggle between my people and a highly organised enemy who has transgressed the Laws of Nations and changed the ordinance that binds civilized Europe together, I appeal to you.

I rejoice in my Empire's effort and I feel pride in the voluntary response from my Subjects over the world who have sacrificed home, fortune and life itself, in order that another may not inherit the free Empire which their ancestors and mine have built.

I ask you to make good these sacrifices.

The end is not in sight. More men and yet more are wanted to keep my Armies in the Field, and through them to secure Victory and enduring Peace.

In ancient days the darkest moment has ever produced in men of our race the sternest resolve.

I ask you, men of all classes, to come forward voluntarily and take your share in the fight.

In freely responding to my appeal you will be giving your support to our brothers who for long months have nobly upheld Britain's past tradition and the glory of her Arms.

George R.I.

KING GEORGE VISITS HIS ARMIES AND APPEALS TO HIS PEOPLE

THROUGHOUT the Great War King George V maintained a close personal contact with all branches of the fighting services, and made numerous visits to France, where he inspected the Army in the field. The upper and lower photographs shown here were taken on the occasion of the late King's second visit in October 1915. Above, His Majesty speaks to General officers of the Canadian Corps near their headquarters; below, the King with the Prince of Wales at Amiens, where they were greeted by General Joffre and President Poincaré. It was during this sojourn in France that King George was injured at Hesdigneul aerodrome when his horse fell and rolled on him.



With the close of the first twelve months of the war, events in France took the gravest turn, with the British forces sorely tried and facing an enemy of increasing strength and power. It was then that the proclamation of King George, reproduced above, was issued calling on men of all classes to take their share in the fight.

TEN MINUTES GOODWILL

A Happy Memory of the Second Christmas Armistice

by Wilfred Ewart

THE author of "Scots Guard," whose description of the battle of Neuve Chapelle appears in Chapter 59, here reveals the fact that (despite strict orders to the contrary) fraternization took place on the second Christmas Day of the war. Later, anything in the nature of an unofficial armistice was met with severe punishment, such as the stopping of leave for units who encouraged the practice

IT is Christmas morning. As I gaze over the parapet on the drab landscape before me, every feature, every rise or fall in the ground, every knoll, every hideous skeleton of shattered buildings, almost every tree, has its story, so consecrated for ever to the memory of the English race is the Aubers Ridge opposite—an inconsiderable, scarcely noticeable rise in the ground. So are the skeleton trees, the hedgerows and fields that fringe its summit, that climb its slope. So are the bright red and dark red roofs of buildings that cluster half-way up the slope and the tall factory chimney in their midst—that of Aubers itself.

In the foreground is a village absolutely shattered. It is scarcely possible to see the brown roofs, the stark walls, and vari-coloured ruins amid the trees. Then comes the church—a ghostly shell, dominating the flat scene. And behind the trenches is a row of tall elms and poplars, looking monstrous in the mist, these marking the line of a road. Immediately in front of them is a big farmstead with a courtyard and a square little home-field—an untidy heap of red bricks amid four naked walls.

BETWEEN the irregular lines of the trenches, with their jumbled white sandbags and untidy earth parapets, is a stream marked by a line of twisted brown willows bent to every conceivable grotesque shape. The stream runs down the middle of No Man's Land, which is itself a place of coarse grasses hiding little mouldering heaps of grey and khaki—the slain of Festubert, of Neuve Chapelle and late September (heaps of old clothes or fallen scarecrows, they look like), of knobs and unexpected pits, of earthy holes and water-logged ditches. And here our men meet the Germans.

So soon as it grows light this morning we start peeping at each other over the top of the parapet . . . calling across to each other. And presently, at about 7.50, a German stands up openly on the parapet and waves his arms. He is followed by two in field-grey overcoats and pill-box caps. Then they come out all down the line, stand up on the parapet, wave, shout, and finally swarm forth from their trenches on either side.

A British sergeant is shot dead almost at the outset, as he stands on the parapet. But this makes no difference. It must be an accident. The supreme craving of humanity, the irresistible, spontaneous impulse born of a common faith and a common fear, fully triumph.

AND so the grey and khaki figures surge towards each other as one man. The movement has started on the right. It spreads like contagion. Only we officers, the sentries, and a few non-commissioned officers remain in our trench. The men meet at the willow-lined stream; they even cross it and mingle together in a haphazard throng. They talk and gesticulate, and shake hands over and over again. They pat each other on the shoulder and laugh like schoolboys, and leap across the little stream for fun. And when an Englishman falls in and a Boche helps him out there is a shout of laughter that echoes back to the trenches.

The Germans exchange cigars and pieces of sausage, and sauerkraut and concentrated coffee for cigarettes and bully beef and ration biscuits and tobacco. They express mutual admiration by pointing and signs. It is our leather waistcoats and trench-coats that attract their attention; it is their trench-overalls, made of coarse canvas, that attract ours. We shout "Hullo, Fritz!" "Good morning, Fritz!" "Merry Christmas!" "Happy Christmas!" "How's your father?" "Come over and call!" "Come and have breakfast," and the like, amid roars of laughter. Even confidences are exchanged in broken English.



A BORN SOLDIER

Mr. Wilfred Ewart came on both sides from families that had produced distinguished soldiers. His paternal grandfather, Lieut.-General J. F. Ewart, fought in the Crimean War, while his mother was a granddaughter of General Sir William Napier.

"When's the war going to end?"

"After the Spring offensive."

"Yes—after the Spring offensive."

"What sort of trenches have you?"

"Rotten! Knee deep in mud and water. Not fit for pigs."

"Aren't you sick of the war? We are!"

"Not a bit."

And the information is even vouchsafed that our Christmas Eve bombardment had caused the Germans a lot of casualties.

SO for ten brief—all too brief—minutes there is peace and goodwill among the trenches on Christmas Day.

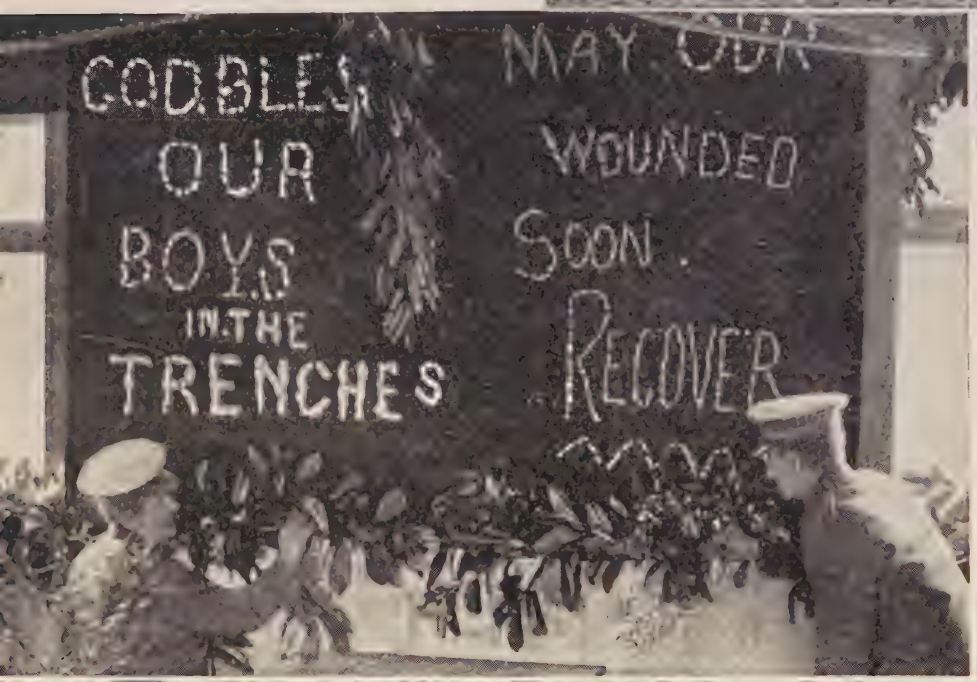
Then from the trenches of the Ninety-fifth Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment two officers in black accoutrements and shiny field-boots come out, wishing to take photographs of our Tommies, and offering them cigars. Their request is refused, and presently they say: "You will have five minutes to get back to your trenches before our artillery will open fire."

And it does. And two or three men are wounded almost at once. But for twenty-four hours not a shot is fired on either side. A common brotherhood of suffering—or is it an act of God, or just human curiosity? has united Englishmen and Bavarian in fraternity on the battlefield this grey Christmas morning which no one on either side who has taken part in this quaint scene will ever forget.

HOW THEY CELEBRATED CHRISTMAS, 1915 BEHIND THE LINES

Though the second year of the war was one of disappointment and many shattered hopes, both for those who fought and those who waited at home, Christmas in 1915 did not pass without the traditional celebrations being observed by the British Army in France. As Mr. Wilfred Ewart reminds us in Chapter 93, there was even a Christmas armistice at one part of the line.





These three photographs recall the Christmas period of 1915. Above, a scrounging party behind the lines takes steps to gain true Christmas fare; below, men of the A.S.C. make their way in Christmas weather to a depot to collect the Christmas mail from home; on the left, decorations are going up in what soldiers called a "cushy" billet.

L.N.A.





MOST WELCOME CALL OF ALL

In the trenches the soldiers were too often only figuratively "fed-up" with bully beef, but behind the lines the food was fairly varied. This bugler of the Army Veterinary Corps is sounding "Come to the cookhouse door" on a very special occasion. It is Christmas Day, 1915, and the sprig of mistletoe in his cap, the smiling faces of the men around him and the tray of plump chickens that the man on his right is carrying prove that it is going to be kept in the old English way.



THE KING MEETS HIS GENERALS IN CRITICAL DAYS

In the latter part of 1915, when his armies were faced with overwhelming tasks, King George V made his second visit to France and conferred with his generals. This photograph, taken in October 1915, shows His Majesty with Sir Herbert Plumer, commander of the Second Army, who is standing between the King and Lieut.-General Sir John Keir, commander of the Fifth Corps. On the right of the photograph are Generals Sir Charles Fergusson and Sir Hew Fanshawe.

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